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THE MORAL SYSTEM OF DANTE'S INFERNO

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William Henry Vincent
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REFERENCES TO THE WORKS OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

THE following notes will explain the more complicated references to St. Thomas:—

1. The *Summa Theologica* is denoted by *S.* In references to the *Summa* the Roman figure always denotes the *quaestio*; the Arabic figures preceding the Roman indicate the divisions of the *Summa*, and those following the Roman show the 'article', and sub-division of the article, from which the quotation is taken. Thus:—

S. 1. 2. xiv. 5 = *Summa, Prima Secundae Partis, quaestio* xiv, *articulus* 5:

S. 2. 2. xxv. 7. *ad* 2 = *Summa, Secunda Secundae Partis, quaestio* xxv, *articulus* 7, *responsio ad secundum.*

2. References to the Commentary on the *Liber Sententiarum* are illustrated by the following example:—

Sent. ii, *D.* xx, *q.* i. 2 = Commentary on Book ii. of the Lib. Sent., *Distinctio* xx, *quaestio* i, *articulus* 2.

In some cases different solutions are given of different parts of the problem. Thus the addition of sol. 1 or sol. 2 to the above reference would mean that the passage was taken from the first or second *solutio.*

3. In referring to St. Thomas's Commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* I have used the abbreviation *Eth.* Thus *Eth.* v. 4 means the fourth *lectio* of the Commentary on the fifth book. References to the actual text of Aristotle are, I hope, clearly distinguished from references to the Commentary.

INTRODUCTION

It is now not far short of six centuries since commentators first began to busy themselves with the *Divine Comedy*, and if the importance of a writer can in any way be measured by the quantity of literature inspired by him, Dante must be counted a rival, or more than a rival, to his masters, Aristotle and Virgil. And yet it is not the quantity of the literature that calls for amazement so much as its unequalled variety. The catalogue of a complete Dante library would suggest that this poet of local passions and forgotten ideals had contrived a way to the sympathy of scholars, artists, philosophers, men of science, statesmen and patriots of every nation in the civilized world. Now when a miscellaneous and even fantastic assemblage of critics begins thus to surround an author, it is natural to suspect a certain artificiality in their homage, as though we were in the stream of a fashion that must presently exhaust itself and leave nothing but sand behind. Or even if there be no ground for such forebodings, at least it will occur to a modern student that nothing is left to him in the field of criticism but the excavation of a few trivialities, which had far better remain undiscovered. The obvious lines of interpretation cannot, surely, have been neglected, nor the greater problems have escaped solution. Perhaps it will always be possible to

> Believe you see two points in Hamlet's soul
> Unseized by the Germans yet;

but a conviction of this kind is better kept as a private tonic than avowed to an unfeeling world. Not that one would presume to depreciate the minuteness of labour which modern scholars have expended upon the by-ways of the *Divine Comedy*, but if it be true that the exposition of Dante's poem has now reached a point beyond which no great advance is possible, men will certainly begin to ask themselves whether it is not enough to accept the verdict of the learned upon disputable matters, and, for the rest, to be guided by that light of nature which sometimes shines less brightly in pro-

fessional critics than in humbler amateurs. And yet there is a simple question which at once I feel bound to propose to the reader. Is it a fact that we understand the *Divine Comedy* in its most important respects? Even this question, however, is not simple enough to allow of an immediate answer, for how shall we decide what is important? If our intention be to ask whether the world has done justice to Dante's genius, whether it has grasped the spiritual significance of his teaching and meditated as it should upon his great picture of life and death and judgement, the only reasonable answer is that, so far, the world has not failed. Nor need the admission depress us. It will not mean that the tragedy and pathos of the *Inferno* have been dissolved into foot-notes, or that the present generation of readers will find no refreshment in the vision of Paradise. It will mean only that Dante is established in the place which he claimed for himself, among the *grand'ombre* of the mightiest poets; that no revolution is likely to dethrone him, nor any new school of criticism to increase his glory. Moreover, it will not be doubtful to a sober judgement that a broad and general understanding of the *Divine Comedy*, such as lies within the capacity of most educated readers, is of vastly deeper importance than any further acquisition of knowledge that learning and philosophy may bring. Small thing as it may be to weep for the sorrows of Francesca and Ugolino, or to feel the enchantment of the Earthly Paradise, yet, in the end, even the profoundest students will be ready to confess that the *Divine Comedy*, like every other poem, must be judged as poetry, and not as a curiosity of mediaeval erudition. There could, indeed, be no object in setting down these commonplaces were it not that I am anxious to define my own position: and what I mean is that no one blessed with the smallest sense of humour could believe that the message of the *Divine Comedy* to humanity had been carefully concealed for six centuries in order that it might be revealed to himself. The venerable city of Oxford is assuredly one of the last places where such a delusion could be entertained.

In the domain of aesthetic and spiritual interpretation, then, there is no room for startling discoveries, but if we return to

our original question and cast it now into this narrower form—Have we learned everything of importance that literary or philosophical researches can teach us about the *Divine Comedy*? I am perfectly convinced that the answer must be negative. And here I am not influenced by the fact that there remain certain problems which are unsolved because they are insoluble. Of these the most notable example is the controversy relating to Beatrice. Was she the daughter of a respectable Florentine, a creation of the poet's imagination, or some strange compound of the two? The reason for the unceasing alternations of opinion upon this point is that, in the nature of things, there can be no evidence to decide it. A man's final estimate of Beatrice is a matter of personal temperament, and, like Dante, every one must solve in his own way the problem of adjusting the high doctrine that love is the source of all vision to the platitude that love is blind. But contrast with the dispute about Beatrice another of scarcely less magnitude,—that which refers to the moral structure of Hell and Purgatory. Here we cannot say that criticism is merely a form of sympathy, of which some men may be finally incapable. The element of personal preference is, at most, discernible in the choice between two broad alternatives: the one that Dante was careless of consistency and philosophical exactness, the other that he must have constructed his nether and middle worlds upon some definite system. Now suppose, for the sake of argument, that the former view is untenable, there must then be a genuine problem for students, and one that ought not to be beyond the range of philosophy, for it is, to say the least of it, improbable that Dante can have succeeded in inventing a moral system so alien from the doctrines prevailing in his lifetime that the study of them is unprofitable. Nay, is it not almost inconceivable that he should have perplexed the simple and scandalized the learned by disregarding the ordinary and, perhaps, authoritative declarations to which they were wont to assent? If, therefore, it can be shown, firstly, that there do exist great difficulties in the moral interpretation of the *Inferno*, and in the comparison between the infernal circles and Purgatory; secondly, that no convincing explanation of these difficulties has yet been

produced; we may surely infer that there still is an opening for students to modify, or even to revolutionize, some of the common opinions concerning the *Divine Comedy*.

The great misfortune attending any attempt at reconstruction is the necessity of destroying what is thought to be well founded. Plato is troubled in one of his dialogues by a doubt of his own ability to state with fairness the doctrine of Protagoras, and the same fear must haunt any writer who is anxious not to lose his own cause by winning a hollow victory over others. In controversy as a form of amusement I can truly affirm that I have no sort of interest, but it is useless to ignore the fact that the obstacles left by Dante in the path of his readers are scarcely so great a hindrance as some of the more brilliant schemes for removing them. Negative criticism is thus, to some extent, inevitable, but I propose to reduce it to the smallest possible dimensions; so small, indeed, that I shall hardly escape the charge of dealing far too summarily with the accumulated results of past research. But even if I fail to convince the reader that I have sufficiently recognized the merits or defects of previous theories, I still shall hope that there will be enough interest in the constructive side of my book to justify its existence. My appeal is primarily to experts; but besides the few who may chance to have occupied themselves with mediaeval philosophy, there are many others who are puzzled by Dante's moral teaching and by the apparent discrepancies between different parts of his poem; and if I can persuade some of these that it is possible to get a little nearer to the truth, I shall feel that something has been accomplished. Aesthetic enjoyment and erudition are very different things, but the line must not be drawn too sharply; and if Dante did mean to represent the working of Divine Justice in the spiritual world, our actual delight in his poem as literature must partly depend upon an understanding of his moral philosophy. Even the most technical and scholastic discussions may thus lead to a finer sort of artistic appreciation, and not the expert only but the general reader is suffering a disadvantage so long as the philosophical foundations of the *Divine Comedy* are unrevealed.

ERRATA

Page 23, line 8 from foot, *for* 'homo' . . . obnoxius *read* 'homo . . . obnoxius'

„ 37, „ 19, for *ens* in *actu* read *ens in actu*

„ 168, „ 19, *for* in *read in*

„ 186, „ 13, for *ordinatus* read *inordinatus*

CHAPTER I

SOME PROBLEMS AND SOME PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

To almost every reader of Dante there must seem to be a want of perfect agreement between the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio*, and though our business is primarily with the *Inferno*, we cannot avoid a comparison between the two regions in which spirits are suffering for their misdeeds. But why, in the first place, is it reasonable to expect agreement between the two companies of sinners? The simplest answer seems to be that it is one and the same Divine Justice which sends this sinner to be punished for ever and that one to be purged of his guilt. Identity of *principle* is therefore a necessary postulate, but perhaps it does not follow that the species of sin mentioned in the *Inferno* must be reproduced exactly in Purgatory. Yet there is, at first, no kind of warrant for imagining that one set of sins can qualify the guilty for Purgatory, another set for the damnation of Hell. If we impute such a doctrine to the author of the *Divine Comedy*, or indeed to any one acquainted with the rudiments of Christian teaching, we are, surely, forgetting the most simple facts in the doctrine of sin. For, on the one hand, every act of mortal sin puts the sinner in danger of eternal punishment, and, on the other hand, there is no act so utterly damnable that repentance and due penance may not wash it away. Repentance, in fact, is the one decisive thing in the spiritual life. Without it the sinner is lost, and with it he must at last be saved. But why should the intervention of repentance cause the sins of Purgatory to differ in name or order or comparative gravity from those of Hell? I am not attempting to prejudge any theories which have affirmed that there is and ought to be a difference; but I wish to assert emphatically that prior to the actual perception of discrepancies no one ought to have much reason for expecting them.

Given, then, that agreement between Hell and Purgatory is a natural anticipation, our next step must be to call Dante himself to account. Had he chosen to be altogether silent and to leave it to the ingenuity of his readers to discover his principles, our ground of complaint would be small. But so far is this from being the case that the acuteness of our difficulty may be ascribed to the very explanations which Dante has thought fit to offer. There are two passages, the eleventh canto of the *Inferno* and the seventeenth of the *Purgatorio*, in which definite statements are put forward about the arrangement of sins. As to the *Purgatorio*, even if that particular canto had been omitted, it must have been patent to every inquirer that Dante was taking as the basis of his system those seven 'capital vices' which are popularly known as the seven deadly sins. 'Deadly sins,' I am bound to remark, is an unfortunate expression; for it suggests *peccata mortalia* rather than *vitia capitalia*, and to confuse these two terms together would be a very elementary blunder. Passing over this minor point, however, we may say that the punishment of the seven capital vices upon the seven cornices of Purgatory is the one fact in Dante's moral system which has never been disputed. And yet the existence of so solid a foundation has created rather than prevented controversy, and the question of the capital vices stands first on the list of critical problems connected with the *Inferno*.

To touch but briefly upon the nature of this difficulty, we seem to find a simple and excellent reason for expecting Dante to recognize every one of the capital vices in the *Inferno*. Every one of them is or may be a mortal sin, and every mortal sin has eternal punishment for its natural consequence. Repentance, indeed, may substitute a temporal for an everlasting penalty, but this is not more true of any one capital vice than of any other. Yet it is undeniable that three of the capital vices, if present in the *Inferno*, are carefully disguised. Many commentators have offered to locate *acedia*, *invidia*, and *superbia* in this or that circle of the *Inferno*, but what they always seem to overlook is that Dante's consistency in respect of philosophy can only be saved at the expense of

his reputation as an artist. If in truth it was his intention to visit all the seven vices with damnation, how can we explain the fact that he has thrown four of them into remarkable prominence, and then concealed the other three (including the two gravest of all) so diligently that after six centuries of searching commentators cannot agree that they are found? I say, then, that to discover these three vices in the *Inferno* is to declare that Dante had no regard for artistic decency, and to replace the question, Why did he omit them? by the question, Why did he hide them away?

Another difficulty, hardly less formidable, is the apparent absence from Purgatory of all the sins punished in the lower circles of Dante's Hell. Heresy may or may not be an exceptional case, but suppose we ignore it for the present and look only at the seventh, eighth, and ninth circles, wherein sins of 'malice' are punished. There we see a large number of definite sins, and if every one of them allows of repentance we have a right, surely, to require their appearance in Purgatory. For a sin that has been repented, though it incurs no longer the final damnation, does not evaporate into nothingness, but brings the doer to Purgatory, whenever his penance is not completed on earth. Why, then, should there be no mention in Purgatory of all that multitude of sins?

Again, we may cease to compare the two worlds with each other and turn to the difficulties peculiar to the *Inferno*. The eleventh canto has already been mentioned, and in course of describing there to Dante the scheme of the *Inferno* Virgil succeeds in creating at least one puzzle for the commentators. He begins by introducing the term *malizia* and by dividing malicious injuries into two classes, according as they are perpetrated by force or by fraud. Sins involving *forza* are referred to the seventh circle, while the eighth and ninth are reserved for *frode*. When Dante objects that nothing has been said of the circles, prior to the sixth, through which they had passed already, Virgil chides him for forgetting his Aristotle and for not perceiving that the sinners in those earlier circles had fallen through *incontinenza*, not through *malizia*. But at this point (*Inf.* xi. 82) Virgil mentions also *la matta*

bestialitade, thus alluding to Aristotle's division of bad dispositions into κακία, ἀκρασία, and θηριότης (*Eth. Nic.* vii. 1145. a. 16). Now the majority of critics hold that the distinction of *forza* and *frode* is borrowed from Cicero (*De Off.* i. § 41), and this has led them to assert that Dante is not attempting to embody the teaching of the *Nicomachean Ethics* in his *Inferno*; or, at least, that *bestialitade* has no recognition. They urge that *bestialitade* is distinct from both *incontinenza* and *malizia*, and that these two occupy the whole Inferno, save only the circle of Heresy, which cannot be relevant. I will not here advance any arguments on the other side, but will content myself with saying that the mention of *la matta bestialitade* is very remarkable if Dante meant nothing by it. The most certain fact is that we cannot identify *frode*, which is called the *proprio male* of man, with *bestialitade*. We seem obliged, therefore, either to identify *bestialitade* with *forza* or to deny that Dante intended to assign to bestial sins any definite place in the *Inferno*. Which alternative is the better we cannot yet decide, but assuredly neither is easy.

The sin of Heresy is another doubtful matter. Strictly speaking, both the *Purgatorio* and the *Inferno* are here affected, but the greater part of the difficulty touches only the *Inferno*, and it is from that point of view that I shall speak of it at present. There is, then, this remarkable fact about the eleventh canto, that Virgil, though resting at the time in the actual region of the Heretics, says not a word about the moral status of Farinata and his companions, but omits altogether to explain their relation to the general scheme of Hell. In other words, neither *malizia* nor *incontinenza* seems to comprehend the Heretics, and their situation is wellnigh as ambiguous as that of the cowards whom both Heaven and Hell reject. As falling within the city of Dis, the sin appears to be separated from the sins of inordinate passion, and yet no distortion of Virgil's words can draw it into the circles of Malice. But can there be a type of sin which is associated neither with occasional nor yet with habitual corruption of the will?

No other problem of the same rank remains to be noticed, but there are several sins in Dante's scheme whose place has

not yet been referred to any acknowledged principle of morality or religion. One critic, for instance, is surprised that Avarice is classed as a sin of impulse rather than of habit; another asks why Flattery and Hypocrisy should sink far below Adultery and Murder; and there seems to be a general feeling abroad that, had Dante chanced to live in a century as enlightened as our own, he would have arranged his sinners far otherwise, and would have assigned to them grades of punishment which modern society could more warmly approve. Now if I may venture to replace this vague dissatisfaction by a more definite judgement, I would suggest that no one has yet produced Dante's reasons for treating some sins as generically malicious, and others as generically due to incontinence. The point is that *malizia* and *incontinenza* are inward conditions of the agent's will, not outward and visible offences. Is it not, therefore, a fact that every species of sinful act may spring *either* from habitual *or* from occasional badness of will? And if so, why should some sins be irrevocably stamped as malicious and others definitely ascribed to incontinence? Why may not all sins be either malicious or passionate, according to the actual condition of the individual sinner?

These problems have been stated very briefly, and I shall exercise a not less arrogant brevity in surveying the various modes of solving them. No one has yet written a 'grammar of assent' for critics, to tell them how much they must discuss minutely and how much they may neglect: but there must, surely, come a time in the history of any controversy, when the task of reviewing its entire course becomes intolerable, when certain landmarks must be taken as established and the possible roads classified accordingly. This, at least, is the only defence I can offer for saluting the whole army of Dante's scholars respectfully but calling only one or two of them by name. My intention is to select two essays, each the work of an eminent scholar, and to regard these as authoritative statements. The authority that will be imputed to them will not, in the first instance, refer to the personal opinions of their authors, but only to their presentation of certain controversies and their review of previous writers. The first of these essays is called

Dante's Sündensystem in Hölle und Fegefeuer, and was written nearly thirty years ago by Karl Witte (*Dante-Forschungen*, ii. 121–60). An English translation of it is to be found in a volume of Witte's essays edited by Mr. Philip Wicksteed (Duckworth, 1898). The other essay is Dr. Moore's 'Classification of sins in the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*,' one of the second series of his *Studies in Dante* (Clarendon Press, 1899). Some years have elapsed since the publication of Dr. Moore's essay, but I believe that one may still assume that no theory of great importance is omitted in the survey undertaken first by Witte and repeated, some twenty years later, by his English successor. After careful consideration, then, of these two essays, one does not find much difficulty in reducing the numerous solutions of our difficulties to two or three general types.

(1) The first kind of explanation which I shall mention affects all the problems previously enumerated, and has, indeed, some bearing upon all possible philosophical questions incidental to the study of Dante. For there are commentators who rest their position upon the privilege of art and literature to be exempt from the consistency which philosophy demands. They argue that Dante was a poet, not a schoolman; that he was probably indifferent to all the questions that exercise his critics; that his allusions to famous moral systems are only casual, and that all attempts to harmonize the various parts of the *Divine Comedy* are, therefore, waste of time. The strongest support of such arguments is that they do appeal to a principle for which it is often important to contend. For if poetry is to be of sufficient excellence even to maintain its place in the market, much more if it is to entitle its author to the society of Homer and Virgil, most certainly it must rise above logic and repudiate the exact tests of science. Nevertheless, since Dante himself has chosen to enter the philosophical arena making loud proclamations to the people, we cannot afterwards allow him to be hustled out by an emergency exit on the plea that he is only a poet. I pass over the suspicious circumstance that critics who favour this policy are apt to take refuge in it at the moment when their own philosophy reaches its limit, but I must, at least, observe that

the question of philosophical consistency is not one which sets all the poets of the world upon the same level. It was no fault of Homer's that the Greeks mistook him for a theologian and so excluded him from Plato's Republic, nor do we readily imagine Horace in cap and gown because he joined himself to the herd of Epicurus. Even Browning was not a professional psychologist, and Shakespeare's 'stuff that dreams are made of' is not an orthodox variety of metaphysical substance. Yet in regard to these matters every poet must be treated as an individual, with proper reference to his tastes and training, to the style of poetry affected by him, and to the literary traditions dominant in his time. And when these simple tests are applied to Dante, we cannot but acknowledge that of all the poets who have attained to great celebrity he is (with the possible exception of Lucretius) the one most likely to have aimed at accuracy in his philosophical utterances. We see that his writings are not leavened merely but saturated with learning; we know that he had studied almost every ancient writer who had influenced the Latin world, that he had mastered the systems of Albertus Magnus and Aquinas, that with genuine and passionate conviction he had declared Philosophy to be the mistress of his soul. When we remember, too, that in the thirteenth century the accepted method of interpreting serious poetry favoured the view that poets were scholars, historians, philosophers, and mystical theologians; when we add to this that it was part of Dante's own vindication of his mother tongue to prove it capable of expressing the loftiest speculations; then, surely, we cannot think that out of pure indifference to accuracy he would court the censure of every learned reader by introducing chaos into his moral system?

Yet it is not on the mere ground of scholastic susceptibilities that this type of argument must be rejected, but for those very aesthetic reasons which form its sole support. If the privileges of Dante as an artist are to excuse his misdemeanours in philosophy, it cannot be judicious to accuse him of artistic blunders as monstrous as ever were made. Consider for a moment the allusion to Aristotle in the eleventh canto of the

Inferno. Nothing could well be less casual or accidental: Dante even sets a kind of trap for Virgil in order that the doctrine of the Philosopher may be quoted. Is it then credible that the moral scheme propounded in that same canto should be in most respects foreign or opposed to the teaching of the *Nicomachean Ethics*? The critics tell us that Aristotle is cited only for one special purpose, the purpose of explaining the exclusion of sins of incontinence from the city of Dis. But, if so, the wanton superfluity of the whole allusion must fill us with amazement. For not only is *bestialitade* introduced without the slightest reason, but an even more subtle confusion is caused by the use of *malizia* in line 82. The context would naturally suggest that the word was employed in an Aristotelian sense, but (if we are to follow these same critics) Aristotle had nothing to do with the structure of the three lowest circles, and Cicero alone had supplied Dante with the distinction between Force and Fraud. To complete this view of the situation, we are often asked to believe that *malizia*, when first mentioned (line 22), bears only a broad and general sense, and not the more technical significance of Aristotle's κακία. Dante is then saved from the charge of idiocy by the plea that, since Aristotle was quoted for one purpose, it was necessary to complete the quotation by a mention of θηριότης. But this, I submit, is a kind of necessity which is neither artistic nor moral nor anything else. Had Aristotle been the only writer who had ever distinguished Incontinence from Malice, there might have been good reason for invoking his authority. But the truth is that this distinction had been allowed by every reputable moralist throughout all the centuries when the very existence of the *Nicomachean Ethics* was forgotten. No special authority was needed for what all admitted, and if Dante went out of his way to allude to Aristotle and then could not effect the allusion without deceiving and bewildering all honest persons, his intelligence must have been strangely unfitted for the production of one of the greatest poems ever written. I maintain, therefore, that the refusal to seek for consistency in Dante's moral system, because the canons of poetry are not those of logic,

is only a weak evasion of a difficulty which ought to be faced.

(2) In passing to a second type of explanation, I wish to point out as clearly as possible that three, if not four, of the problems ultimately to be considered will now be set aside. A return to the disputes concerning *bestialitade* and other matters peculiar to the *Inferno* will not be possible until the whole method of interpreting Dante has been reconstructed. For the present we must restrict ourselves to the examination of arguments relating to the differences between the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio*, especially in the matter of the capital vices. And first of all we have to deal with those who do not, indeed, admit that Dante would write carelessly and at random, but suppose that his Hell and Purgatory were deliberately constructed upon different lines. And, manifestly, if diversity was Dante's intention, we shall look in vain for unity of plan. The main safeguard of this theory is its vagueness, but one may doubt if it is much more than an *ignoratio elenchi*. That Hell and Purgatory do outwardly differ is undeniable, and to assert that Dante designed the difference is only to re-state the problem. On the other hand, if we are asked to go beyond the superficial discrepancy and admit some sort of diversity in principle, the greatest caution will be necessary, lest we fall into an assumption which cannot for a moment be entertained. Let us bear in mind, to begin with, that there is one unity which can neither be divided nor multiplied, and that is the unity of God's justice. If two sinners die simultaneously, the one penitent the other unrepentant, the standard by which the Divine Justice will try and distinguish them is unquestionably one and the same. No one has yet suggested that, in Dante's opinion, there is one pair of scales for those destined for Purgatory, another pair for the damned. The inner and fundamental unity of principle which must run through all the judgements passed upon sinners cannot really have been doubted by any one, and the critics with whom I am attempting to grapple can only mean that the same principle may, under varying circumstances, take outwardly different shapes. Such a proposition cannot

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be contested in the abstract, but neither has it any value until some one actually *produces* this principle of Dante's, which can vary so much in its outward manifestations that certain sins which are punished in Hell cannot appear in Purgatory, while certain other sins found in Purgatory are, as it seems, not discoverable in Hell. The real point, as was affirmed earlier in this chapter, is that every mortal sin involves damnation, while every such sin, if repented, should then involve the temporary pains of Purgatory, if not wholly expiated on earth. Until this strong reason for resemblance between Hell and Purgatory is clearly apprehended, it is idle to tell us that Dante intended the two worlds to be different.

(3) We must turn, therefore, to more definite kinds of explanation. What remains now is the whole class of commentators who neither evade nor misconceive the issue, but, admitting the need for harmony between Hell and Purgatory, try to show that such unity does actually exist. But these, again, may be divided into two broad classes. On the one side will be those who hold that the capital vices are, one and all, punished in the *Inferno*: on the other, those who believe that three of them, *superbia*, *invidia*, and *acedia*, are missing. The absence of those vices they attribute not to Dante's inconsistency, but to the very principle of Justice, which, as they think, bids us expect to find in Purgatory certain sins not punishable in Hell.

The course that I shall follow at this point may appear arbitrary and arrogant: for I propose to dismiss until further notice all attempts to discover in the *Inferno* the three capital vices mentioned above. I am not making a final assertion that none of the three is to be found in the infernal circles, but since no one who affirms their presence has yet told us why Dante should have buried them in obscurity instead of punishing them, like *luxuria*, *gula*, *avaritia*, and *ira*, each in its own circle, I think that theories purporting to account for their absence have a prior claim to our notice. Afterwards, if all other alternatives prove impossible, we can resort, perhaps, to the desperate expedient of angling for the missing vices in the darkness of the bottomless pit. Assum-

ing, then, that to banish Pride, Envy, and Spiritual Sloth from the *Inferno* is the more plausible policy, we must inquire next whether any one has invented an explanation of their absence compatible with such unity of moral design as we are bound to expect from Dante. Out of all the suggested explanations there is only one for which I shall beg the reader's attention, and that one is Witte's own. In that same essay which we have accepted already for another purpose there is a simple yet brilliant hypothesis as to the difference between Hell and Purgatory, an hypothesis which, sound or unsound, is superior to all others in that it points to a principle comprehensive enough to account for a wide divergence between the two parts of Dante's scheme.

The two fundamental propositions of Witte are that—

> the punishment of the damned is exclusively penal, the penance of the souls seeking purification remedial,

and that—

> the penal codes of earth and hell are analogous in taking note of deeds only, and not of guilty thoughts which have resulted in no overt acts. (*Dante-Forschungen*, ii. 134, Engl. Trans., p. 129.)

From these premisses he quickly infers that Pride, Envy, and Sluggishness will not be punished in the *Inferno*; for these are only 'sinful *propensities*' (*Neigungen*), and—

> however unreasonably a man may secretly over-estimate his own powers, however enviously he may look on his neighbour's good fortune, this will not in itself qualify him for a place in Dante's Hell. (Eng. Trans., p. 130.)

Only if Pride or Envy lead to overt acts of fraud or violence does the sinner earn some kind of eternal punishment.

This theory of Witte's has, on the surface, much to recommend it. In the first place, it accounts for the omission of certain capital vices from the *Inferno*, and at the same time brings their outward results to punishment. Secondly, it rests upon two solid facts: for (1) it is true that the punishments of Hell are exclusively penal, those of

Purgatory mainly remedial; (2) it is also true that earthly codes of Justice barely attempt to go beyond overt acts, and that earthly judges pay no heed to motives, dispositions, or propensities, except in a very superficial sense. For myself, I can honestly say that I have placed Witte's theory in solitary eminence because it surpasses all others in ingenuity and importance. But when, after sufficiently admiring it, one comes to ask whether it can possibly be accepted, my only answer must be that I hope to show in the following chapter that a more preposterous theory was never yet put forward by a scholar of such great and deserved reputation.

CHAPTER II

WITTE'S THEORY

If justification is to be found for the uncompromising judgement expressed in the previous chapter upon Witte's theory of eternal punishment, we ought now to examine and develop his meaning. But to this there is a surprising obstacle, in the fact that Witte himself appears to have felt no interest in the matter. He lays down a doctrine which goes to the very heart of moral philosophy; a doctrine, too, which, in Dante's age, would have thrown every lecture-room in Europe into an uproar, but he does not betray the slightest acquaintance with the philosophical import of his own statements, nor even the most shadowy suspicion that he might perhaps be destroying Christianity, natural religion, and moral philosophy at a single blow. We are at a loss, therefore, as to how this theory is to be translated into a form that will make it amenable to criticism, and are almost reduced to tabulating all possible interpretations of it and reviewing them one by one. Look, for instance, at a statement which in the English translation runs as follows:—

> When the poet, in his general classification of sin, says 'Injury is the aim of all malice . . .', he implies that the sinful desire to break one of the Commandments, so long as *through lack of courage or opportunity* it remains unaccomplished, is not punished in Hell; and it is only when by force or fraud the sinner *has attained his unlawful goal, or at least done all in his power to attain it*, that he receives the punishment. (Eng. Trans., p. 130.)

In this quotation I am printing two clauses in italics, because it is they especially which illustrate the remarkable failure of Witte to see the force of his own observations. Here, first of all, we have 'lack of courage' and 'lack of opportunity' put down as though they were casual alternatives; while,

secondly, 'attained his unlawful goal' and 'done all in his power to attain it' are also treated as optional expressions. Witte thus brings into the happiest union two doctrines not merely distinct but mutually destructive, one of which accords with his own hypothesis, while the other, if fully considered, must lead to its total rejection. For if a man may not suffer eternal punishment unless he 'attained his unlawful goal' Witte's doctrine is tenable, but if he incurs damnation so soon as 'he has done all in his power to attain it' the doctrine will speedily prove to be useless. And are we really expected to assent to a theory which places 'lack of courage' and 'lack of opportunity' on the same moral level? For if so Napoleon in St. Helena seems to fall into the same class as

colui
che fece per viltà il gran rifiuto.

You may answer that Witte cannot have meant such absurdity, and that his words allow of a more reasonable sense. But that is precisely the point of my criticism. Witte has not defined his own meaning, but has wrapped in perfect vagueness a doctrine which is idle and useless if not expressed with the utmost lucidity. The more we examine his statements the greater is the difficulty of submitting them to intelligent criticism. First of all, however, we must take account of the one definite illustration through which he has chosen to signify his meaning. The comparison between the penal codes of earth and hell, between Minos and an earthly judge, is not ambiguous, for the principles that govern human justice ought not to be beyond our comprehension. No one really pretends that an earthly judge has a commission to look into the offender's heart. Overtness is a necessary condition of legal guilt; responsibility is measured in a way that disregards the problem of moral freedom; 'motives' mean little more than the actual intentions of the moment; all men are treated as equal. Or if there is any way of refining and modifying these general principles it will only be by some technical evasion, and always within the bounds of traditional usage. All this is very true, but the fact which Witte seems wholly

to have forgotten is that the legal way of dealing with men's souls and motives is not the glory of human justice but its most patent and unhappy defect. We need not believe that laws are arbitrary and tyrannical: we may even regard earthly republics as an image of the heavenly, and human justice as a derivation from on high: but, surely, the most distressing and eminent failure of legal justice to reproduce the divine exemplar is seen in its exaltation of the outward fact and its disregard of the inward. The law, no doubt, displays a deeper prudence than an impetuous critic might be ready to acknowledge. For, knowing that it possesses no standard for the measurement of moral inequalities, no magnifying-glass that can expose the secrets of the heart, the law most wisely avows its own limitations and guides its practice by such principles as will work least mischief in the end. But though we commend the discretion of earthly justice and applaud its practice, we should hardly be prepared to submit our souls to it for final judgement, nor should we expect to find Divine Omniscience contenting itself with that same degree of insight into moral behaviour which satisfies a human jury. When Dante was about to enter the Inferno he saw inscribed on its portal the words—

> Giustizia mosse il mio alto fattore;
> Fecemi la divina potestate,
> La somma sapienza e il primo amore. (*Inf.* iii. 4–6.)

Did he, then, step through the gateway only to find that Minos, the appointed instrument of Wisdom, Love, Power, and Justice, was reproducing with perfect fidelity the most lamentable defect in the methods of human law? Or when he wrote to Can Grande, concerning the *Divine Comedy*,

> si accipiatur opus allegorice, subiectum est 'homo' prout merendo et demerendo per arbitrii libertatem est Iustitiae praemianti aut punienti obnoxius (*Ep.* x. 172),

did he mean that the guilt of sinners was to be estimated by a principle which ignores all the deeper problems of merit and demerit, and reduces *arbitrii libertas* to an empty phrase? Witte has, in fact, appealed not merely to the conventions of human justice but to that very fact which illuminates the

difference between the human and the divine criterion. Exactly thus does St. Thomas Aquinas distinguish divine and human judgements:—

haec est differentia inter legem divinam et mundanam, quia lex mundana iudicat facta et dicta, divina autem non haec tantum sed etiam cogitata. Et ratio huius est quia illa est per homines qui iudicant ea quae apparent exterius, sed divina est a Deo qui exterius interiusque conspicit. (*Opusc.* iii.)

But though Witte's attempt to interpret the *Inferno* by the analogy of human justice may have been unfortunate in expression, his supporters might well reply that weightier arguments are needed before we decide that this theory is useless. Granting that God is not guided by our shallow principles, and that Minos does scrutinize the inmost secrets of the heart, may we not still believe that overtness has something to do with the gravity of transgressions? May not the external act add a last touch of badness which can never belong to the inward determination of the will? There is no doubt, I think, that we shall gain by enlarging the bounds of the discussion and by considering in a more philosophical manner the place which overtness holds in moral action and in the estimation of moral guilt. A purely general argument would, however, be useless, and we shall do well to confine our attention to such doctrines of theology and philosophy as were certainly familiar to Dante. If it can be shown that to make the difference between everlasting and temporary punishment turn upon overtness of action would have outraged the feelings of Dante's educated contemporaries, the *onus probandi* will certainly be thrown upon Witte's supporters, and the burden is likely to prove too heavy.

How, then, can the moral principle put forward by Witte best be referred to the judgement of Dante's contemporaries? Among the various doctrines which influenced the thirteenth century those of Christianity itself were clearly the weightiest. But Christianity is, unhappily, far too vague a term for simple application, and one would think that Witte, at least, must

have understood it in some very esoteric sense if he could suppose Dante's acceptance of the Christian morality to be consistent with the exclusion of sins of the heart from the *Inferno*. For our Lord's most striking reformation of the ancient law is found in the Sermon on the Mount, and nowhere is the language less ambiguous than in the following verses :—

> Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. (Matt. v. 27–8.)

According to Witte, the meaning of this passage would have been rendered plainer by the addition of the words, 'and whosoever committeth adultery in his heart shall go to Purgatory but not to Hell.' It would be interesting to know what a theologian in the Middle Ages would have said to such a doctrine! That Witte is, in effect, supposing Dante to have turned a deaf ear to the authentic voice of Christianity is obvious: but perhaps philosophy may have found some way of complicating the question, or perhaps the higher teaching of the Gospel ought not to be applied to the *Inferno*. That Our Lord's name is never mentioned there has often been noticed, and if the omission be anything more than a mark of respect, it might conceivably be meant as an intimation that ignorance of purely Christian principles cannot bring any sinner to a worse place than Limbo, and that the inhabitants of the lower circles are all condemned for breaches of the natural law known even to the Gentiles. Be this as it may, we may admit that Witte's theory ought not to be rejected solely because it seems to conflict rather obviously with Christian teaching. The point that needs to be established is that not Christianity only but all the secular (not to say Pagan) philosophy known to Dante would absolutely have condemned the notion that overtness was essential to the existence of damnable sins. Now Dante was acquainted with nearly all the philosophy inherited by the Latin world, and we cannot undertake the task of ranging through an

infinity of authors in the hope of extracting from them a single verdict. Fortunately, a more simple and, I believe, more convincing method of testing Witte's hypothesis is open to us. The notion of orthodoxy in philosophy is distasteful to the modern world, nor is it true that any period of the Middle Ages was free from bold speculation. Nevertheless, the lifetime of Dante was just the period at which the tendency to accept a complete system of philosophy was at its height; and many of those who had fallen under the sway of Aquinas must have felt that all previous doctrines had been welded together into a philosophy so compact and so comprehensive that they might safely regard it as a canon of truth. And, further, we must remember that few, if any, of the great mediaeval controversies had been occupied with the fundamental principles of morality. For centuries there had been a substantial agreement upon these matters among the doctors, and a large part of the authority acquired by the writings of St. Thomas was derived from the fact that he was thought to represent the finest tradition. His amazing skill and industry had marshalled all the wise men of Pagan and Christian antiquity and triumphantly displayed the harmony of their doctrines. But the use that I propose to make of Aquinas in this work is so extensive that I must postpone the explanation of it to a more suitable place. Here I shall simply assume that Aquinas represents the plainest and most authoritative form of the moral teaching in which Dante had been trained. If, therefore, there is good evidence that Witte's theory implies in Dante either ignorance or rejection of that teaching, some excuse of remarkable cogency will have to be produced for continuing to hold the theory.

The writings of St. Thomas furnish many possible introductions to the topic in question, and of these the most appropriate to my immediate purpose is his exposition of the Mosaic Law. Witte has appealed to the principles of human law, and we are ready to allow that there may be reasons for not testing his theory, in the first instance, by its conformity to the higher principles of Christianity. Now the Ancient Law, with its moral precepts embodied in the Decalogue, is

placed in the philosophy of St. Thomas upon a level which is neither purely human nor perfectly Christian. It has important points of contact with human codes of law, and yet surpasses the ordinary practice of a law court in its conception of moral conduct: it is 'a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ', but cannot of itself produce those more spiritual virtues which belong to the state of Grace. Thus a study of the principles implied in the Decalogue, their merits and their limitations, though it fail, perhaps, to convince us that Witte is necessarily in error, will have the effect of exposing in a forcible manner the difficulty of interpreting the *Inferno* in the sense required by his theory. For we shall learn that the superficiality of the legal methods prevailing in earthly courts of justice needs nothing so exalted as the Sermon on the Mount to correct it, since even a far dimmer revelation had sufficed to show that the very point of contrast between divine and human judgements lay in the fact that a human judge could not pass beyond external actions, whereas God could scrutinize the heart and will.

The nature of the *lex vetus* is no isolated point of inquiry, but part of a systematic deduction, wherein St. Thomas declares the eternal source of all laws, the number and nature of the derivations from it, and the kind of authority that each may claim. He teaches that there is one *lex aeterna* to which all creation is subject, a law expressive of God's operation in the universe, and itself the origin of all other laws which afterwards claim obedience. First among these derivative laws comes the *lex naturalis*, a term not to be applied to the whole of Nature but restricted to rational creatures. All natural things, indeed, are subject to divine providence, but

> rationalis creatura excellentiori quodam modo divinae providentiae subiacet, inquantum et ipsa fit providentiae particeps, sibi ipsi et aliis providens . . . et talis participatio legis aeternae in rationali creatura lex naturalis dicitur (*S.* 1. 2. xci. 2.)

This *lex naturalis* consists in the first principles of morality, the ultimate rules of conduct which, like the indemonstrable principles of science, are implanted in every human heart and can never be eradicated from it. Yet, thanks to human cor-

ruption, the mere existence of a *lex naturalis* is insufficient to secure the safety of human society, and hence comes into existence the *lex humana*. Human law, in its turn, is not an arbitrary invention, but derives its authority from the *lex naturalis* in the same way that the natural was derived from the eternal. Thus St. Thomas writes:—

omnis lex humanitus posita intantum habet de ratione legis inquantum a lege naturae derivatur. Si vero in aliquo a lege naturali discordet, iam non erit lex sed legis corruptio. (*S.* 1. 2. xcv. 2.)

Human law has, in fact, a commission to make natural law effective, by the deduction of secondary from primary principles and by supplying the discipline or coercion without which men will never arrive at the voluntary practice of morality. But besides human law there must also be a *lex divina* (not to be confounded with *lex aeterna*), and one at least of St. Thomas's reasons for the existence of this must be examined. If the goal of human effort were not beyond the reach of natural faculty, there would be no need to add anything to the natural and human laws; but since man, as St. Thomas expresses it,

ordinatur ad finem beatitudinis aeternae, quae excedit proportionem naturalis facultatis humanae, ideo necessarium fuit ut supra legem naturalem et humanam dirigeretur etiam ad suum finem lege divinitus data. (*S.* 1. 2. xci. 4.)

Human law, he means, cannot order the spiritual life of man, nor penetrate to the deeper springs of conduct, but the *lex divina*, which implies some form of revelation, enjoins the whole practice of morality and religion. Because, however, the highest form of revelation was not made all at once, the divine law has to be divided into *lex vetus* and *lex nova*, these being distinguished, in the phrase of St. Thomas, *sicut perfectum et imperfectum in eadem specie* (*S.* 1. 2. xci. 5). The imperfection of the ancient law is manifest. Divine as it was in origin, it did not point (save in types and figures) to more than a *bonum sensibile et terrenum*, whereas the new law openly bids us look for a *bonum intelligibile et caeleste*.

In this brief genealogy of all possible kinds of law we see how

the original and eternal ordinances of God, in the fulfilment of which lies the final end of all creatures, are first impressed on the heart of every rational being and then, because of human infirmity, made explicit in the codes of political societies and in the commandments announced to Jews and to Christians. Our business now is to compare together the three instruments designed for man's assistance, the *lex humana*, the *lex vetus*, and the *lex nova*, and by distinguishing their moral gradations to discover, if possible, some single and unchanging principle which is exhibited in all punishment of sin.

However clearly St. Thomas may see the limitations of human law, he must not be suspected of depreciating its function. It is never the right of the state to interfere with morality that he questions, but only its practical ability. The maxim of Isidorus, *lex debet esse possibilis*, is adopted as a guiding principle, but, with due respect for the bounds of possibility, the state ought certainly to undertake the moral control of the citizen. True, the aim of the state is always the *bonum commune* rather than the perfection of individuals, but since all the virtues have some relation to the public good, St. Thomas concludes, after the manner of Aristotle, that *nulla virtus est de cuius actibus lex praecipere non possit* (*S.* 1. 2. xcvi. 3). He makes at the same time this modification :—

> non tamen de omnibus actibus omnium virtutum lex humana praecipit, sed solum de illis qui ordinabiles sunt ad bonum commune. (Ibid.)

To this he adds that an 'act of virtue' may be understood in two senses, either as denoting merely that a man *operatur virtuosa*, or as implying, beyond and above the external performance, that he has acted *eo modo quo virtuosus operatur*. Now the limitations of human law are such that virtuous acts cannot be demanded of the citizen save in the more superficial sense. To insist on a certain kind of inward condition is beyond the power of civil rulers. The law is a means, indeed, of producing virtue in the fuller sense, but this it does only by assuming that the continual performance of outward acts will eventually induce the agent to perform them in the

right spirit. The external act thus satisfies the claim of the state, but not its aspiration. Now in this way, more manifestly than in any other, is the divine law distinguished from human. When arguing that the divine law is not superfluous, St. Thomas advances the following reason :—

quia de his potest homo legem facere de quibus potest iudicare. Iudicium autem hominis esse non potest de interioribus actibus qui latent, sed solum de exterioribus motibus qui apparent: et tamen ad perfectionem virtutis requiritur quod in utrisque actibus homo rectus existat. Et ideo lex humana non potuit cohibere et ordinare sufficienter interiores actus, sed necessarium fuit quod ad hoc superveniret lex divina. (*S.* 1. 2. xci. 5.)

In this passage the term *lex divina* undoubtedly includes both the ancient law and the new, but afterwards St. Thomas explains that the superiority of the new to the old lies in its still higher claims to control the actions of men, and in its greater power of actually punishing the unseen offences. All divine law, in fact, differs from human in that Divine Justice has always power to reach the inward life of the soul, but the revelation of this power was not made abruptly, and the old law fell far short of the new.

All this while I shall probably seem liable to the criticism that the precepts of the ancient law were delivered only to the chosen people, and that Dante may have refused to import them into his *Inferno* for the same kind of reason that he chose (perhaps) to ignore the moral conceptions peculiar to Christianity. But though the *lex vetus* was declared to the Jews alone, we should quite misunderstand the situation if we made haste to infer that none but Jews had a chance of becoming acquainted with the moral ordinances enjoined by Moses. For the term *lex vetus* denotes the whole of the ancient dispensation: it is not confined to the moral precepts (i.e. the Decalogue), but includes all the ceremonial and judicial observances described in the Mosaic books, and only these latter, as St. Thomas tells us, were intended exclusively for the Jews. The moral precepts were simply those of the law of nature, and were, therefore, binding upon all men :—

lex vetus manifestabat praecepta legis naturae, et superaddebat quaedam propria praecepta. Quantum igitur ad illa quae lex vetus continebat de lege naturae, omnes tenebantur ad observantiam veteris legis, non quia erant de veteri lege, sed quia erant de lege naturae. (*S.* 1. 2. xcviii. 5.)

But if these precepts were binding upon all men, is any one prepared to suggest that, according to St. Thomas, they were to be obeyed only in the external manner by the Gentiles, but with inward conformity by the Jews?

Let us be content, however, to start now from the identification of the moral part of the *lex vetus* with the Ten Commandments, for the comments of St. Thomas upon the Decalogue throw still more light upon the controversy which led to this whole discussion. According to the Latin way of enumerating the commandments, the first three expound our duty to God, the last seven our duty to our neighbour; and within the second table are certain minor divisions also worthy of remark. Passing over the command to honour parents, we find six prohibitions remaining, and these contemplate three distinct kinds of *nocumentum*, according as our neighbour is injured *opere* or *ore* or *corde*. For our present purpose there is no need to distinguish further between *opere* and *ore*, but there does seem to be a remarkable difference between any kind of outward sin and the sins of concupiscence which take place only in the heart. We find, accordingly, that long before the time of St. Thomas doubts had been expressed by the learned as to whether these concluding prohibitions were in keeping with the rest of the Decalogue. If the ancient law thus forbids concupiscence, asks the *Magister Sententiarum*,

quare dicitur lex comprimere manum et non animum: Evangelium vero et manum et animum?

In other words, does not the characteristic point of difference between the old and the new law thus disappear? The answer of St. Thomas is in two parts. First he justifies the existence of the precepts forbidding concupiscence, writing as follows:—

intentio legis est ut homines ad virtutem inducantur. Ad virtutem autem non sufficit ut actus virtutis qualitercumque

fiat . . . similiter etiam non sufficit quod actus contrarius qualitercumque praetermittatur, nisi etiam voluntas illud faciendi derelinquatur et passiones inclinantes ad actum illicitum ordinentur. Et ideo in praeceptis Decalogi non debuit solum prohiberi actus illicitus, sed etiam concupiscentia illicitarum rerum. (*Sent.* iii, D. xl, q. i. 1.)

And again:—

quia quandoque in corde peccatur non perveniendo ad actum, tunc peccatum cordis a peccato exterioris operis distinguitur, et ideo etiam diverso praecepto prohibetur. (Ibid.)

Up to this point the statements certainly give the impression that the ancient law did claim jurisdiction over the soul, but in the very next article of the same *quaestio* he concludes that the new law surpassed the old exactly in the manner suggested by Peter the Lombard's question, and the result of the argument is expressed in the words, *ergo lex vetus animum non cohibebat* (q. i. 2). For a moment there seems to be a contradiction here, but a solution is found in the technical distinction between *prohibitio* and *cohibitio*. The latter word, as used in this context, refers strictly to the infliction of punishment, not to the forbidding of the sin. To say that the ancient law did not prohibit anything but outward acts, or that it claimed no authority over the inward life, would be false; but to say that the punishments exacted by the ancient law were only temporal and physical is perfectly true. The new law of the Gospel goes beyond that point, for it does not merely insist that the inward act shall be righteous, but asserts its power over the immortal soul of man, and so threatens him with eternal punishment or promises him eternal bliss:—

cohibitio legis se extendit quantum poena inflicta per legem . . . poenae autem temporales pro peccatis animi infligi non possunt nisi quatenus in actum exteriorem prorumpunt; alias enim ab homine de eis iudicari non potest; et ideo lex vetus manum et non animum cohibere dicebatur.

But the new law, St. Thomas adds,

aeterna promittit et comminatur in praemium et poenam; aeterna autem poena ab illo iudice infligitur qui est cordis scrutator, et ideo non solum manum sed etiam animum cohibet (*Sent.* iii, D. xl, q. i. 2).

Lastly, in reply to an objection, St. Thomas says :

omnem concupiscentiam quantum ad genus suum lex prohibebat ; non tamen ab omni cohibebat per poenas, sed solum ab ea quae prorumpebat in actum. (Ibid. ad 3.)

One may urge, perhaps, that there is no logic in prohibiting all forms of concupiscence when only some of them can be punished, but, however illogical the situation, it was thus that St. Thomas saw it. The ancient law was undoubtedly in an ambiguous position. As divine law it claimed the allegiance of man's heart and mind, a moral rather than a legal adherence ; but as administered by fallible human beings, unillumined by a clear revelation of eternal things, it could inflict no effective penalties upon the soul, and could in practice scarcely venture to punish sinful concupiscence until some external result had appeared.

After inquiring thus into the nature of the *lex vetus*, we are justified in drawing certain conclusions. We may say, firstly, that morality differentiates itself from legality precisely at the moment when the inward test of merit begins to supplant the outward. Even human law, as being ultimately a deduction from the *lex aeterna* and *lex naturalis*, aims at fostering true morality, but its administrators are necessarily guided by outward facts, and herein lies the inferiority of human law to divine. Secondly, we perceive in the very limitations of the ancient law that inward scrutiny and eternal punishment stand and fall together. Where the scrutiny is impossible the punishment cannot be inflicted, and where the eternal punishment cannot be inflicted only the overt deed is actually punished. But God is *scrutator cordis* and, as St. Thomas says in another place, *apud divinum iudicium voluntas pro facto computatur* (*S. con. G.* iii. 144). Hence God can inflict eternal punishment without injustice to the sinner.

One more quotation from the same exposition of the Decalogue will be useful, because it refers to a slightly different point. St. Thomas supposes a critic to argue in this fashion :—

Praecepta legis ad merendum ordinantur. Sed meritum in aliquo actu consistit. Cum ergo in praeceptis negativis non

ponatur aliquis actus, sed solum negetur, videtur quod praecepta decalogi non debuerunt per negationem assignari. (*Sent.* iii, D. xxxvii, q. i. 2.)

The answer, which comes about a page later, is this:—

quamvis in praeceptis negativis privetur actus exterior potius quam ponatur, includitur tamen actus rationis eligentis repressionem cupiditatis vel concupiscentiae quae ad actus prohibitos inclinabat, et in hoc meritum consistit.

Here we have a new emphasis on the fact that merit (or demerit) depends on a positive but inward act; or, in other words, we learn that the *actus rationis eligentis* is the essential condition, and infer that the external act will add nothing of importance except for the practical purposes of a human judge. Perhaps, however, the inference would be a little hasty, and we have now reached the verge of a deeper argument, one which demands a more general expression than the study of the Decalogue can supply. That study, I hope, has not been wasted, for it has taught us that even a far smaller element of divinity than belongs to the new law of the Gospel can impart to Justice a principle which must make Witte's theory of eternal punishment utterly inadmissible; and the probability that Dante would set himself in opposition to all that he had ever learned about God's dealings with sinners is so infinitesimal that an extension of the argument into a wider area will perhaps seem superfluous. Nevertheless, I shall not be satisfied until I have shown that Witte's opinion is untenable, not merely when tried by Christian or Jewish standards, but because all the philosophy in which Dante had been educated would absolutely have forbidden him to construct an *Inferno* in which overtness of action was regarded as indispensable to the existence of damnable sin. The refutation of Witte, too, is only a secondary matter, and I shall be the first to admit that our ultimate interpretation of the *Inferno* will be greatly assisted by a clearer understanding of the relation of outward to inward in moral action.

When we speak of 'secular philosophy' in connexion with the thirteenth century, we have to consider what sense can

be attached to the term. No philosophical question of that period was treated in the manner of modern rationalism, as though God's existence and agency could be doubtful, or as though moral terms could acquire their true meaning without reference to a divine order manifested in Nature. Yet the vulgar assumption that in the Middle Ages Faith and Reason were confounded has little to warrant it, especially in the greater systems from which Dante drew so much of his intellectual nourishment. Like most men who lived before the days of Kant, St. Thomas brings within the province of demonstration a vast deal that would now be excluded; but he does not suppose Reason capable of proving or disproving the Christian creed; or, to put the case in another way, he withdraws the doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Sacraments from the sphere proper to philosophy, but holds that the existence of God and the impress of His will upon the universe are revealed in Nature, as a cause is visible in its effects. Again, the mutual limitation of Faith and Reason is felt on one side as much as on the other. If Reason cannot touch doctrinal propositions, neither is Faith required for the discovery of moral laws: and though Christianity may truly claim to have made a higher revelation of goodness by rising from the moral to the spiritual, and by adding the theological to the cardinal virtues, it does not follow that Pagan antiquity walked in utter darkness, or that philosophy could light no lamps bright enough to show the way to honest men. There is, indeed, a sense in which

> le quattro chiare stelle
> che vedevi staman son di là basse
> e queste son salite ov' eran quelle (*Purg.* viii. 91),

but the four had given light enough to save men from moral destruction, and they remain still as heralds and attendants of the more glorious three. The principles of morality, in fact, are no part of revealed religion, and St. Thomas is as ready to prove them by the mouth of Aristotle and Cicero as from the teaching of Augustine and Gregory, or even from the books of the New Testament.

Philosophy, therefore, is something external to Christianity

and Judaism, and on entering this new stage of the argument we shall gain by starting from the simple question—What is the meaning of the terms 'good' and 'evil'? For just as it seemed impracticable to discuss the Decalogue without dipping into the wider philosophy of Law, so we are not likely to give a satisfactory account of right and wrong in human action unless we track those notions to their source. Concerning the very existence of evil there is an almost primaeval dilemma. Whether to derive it from an original principle, and so open the door to pessimism and other moral diseases, or to refer it to the same parentage as good, and so imperil human faith in God's justice—this is one of the most ancient of moral perplexities, and one that perpetually recurs. Christianity was involved in the controversy almost from its earliest years, and it was swiftly perceived that no other doctrine would prove so fatal as that of a separate principle of evil. Once admit that there is any kind of existence outside the control of God's goodness, and no religion can long retain its efficiency. But if the opinion that evil is *aliqua natura* must be rejected, another difficulty is imminent. Good and evil, if the terms are to mean anything, must be exclusive and contradictory of each other, but if they proceed from a single author, can evil be anything more than pure negation or illusion? The question shows that a certain moral danger, being ejected by one door, might easily return by another. For to allow the unreality of evil is to encourage the same antinomian practices as might flow from the belief that evil is a separate principle. Evil cannot be treated as pure negation, unless there be a way of reconciling its absence from the nature of God with its reality in finite creatures, such reality being a necessary postulate if rational beings are to be held accountable for their actions. This was the problem inherited by St. Thomas, and we must touch upon the main points of his solution.

Taking, as a first maxim, *omne ens, inquantum est ens, est bonum* (*S.* I. v. 3), or even *bonum et ens sunt idem secundum rem* (*S.* I. v. 1), St. Thomas adds at once a qualification which makes it impossible to identify goodness with being. The

difference in *ratio*, as he expresses it, is indicated by an allusion to the opening sentences of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, where Aristotle approves the opinion, *bonum est quod omnia appetunt*. This *ratio appetibilis* is the characteristic mark of the good. Now since it is the very nature of God to be good, and since also there is a similitude of God in all created things, all things are naturally objects of *appetitus* and can present themselves *sub specie boni*. The existence of any kind of appetite, however, suggests the existence of imperfection, for nothing strives after that which it has already. God eternally realizes his own perfection, and God alone is free from appetite: all other things are struggling towards a more perfect state, and somewhere in the struggle arises evil. The simplest contrast between perfect and imperfect is found in the distinction between form and matter, or, more correctly, between *actus* and *potentia*. May we then identify evil with the potentiality of matter, good with the actualization of form? St. Thomas will by no means allow this inference. To him it is true that only *ens* in *actu* is perfect, and true that only the perfect can excite desire, but from this he only argues that the distinction of *actus* and *potentia*, first observed in simple existence, must appear again in the case of goodness. Whatever is *ens in potentia* is *bonum in potentia*, and should we even adopt the 'Platonic' opinion that matter is pure negation of being, St. Thomas would not feel obliged to regard it as evil: for the Platonists themselves had thrust *bonum* even beyond the margin of *ens*, and had taught that matter, though non-existent, could still participate in the good, in so far as it implied an *aptitudo ad bonum* (*S.* 1. v. 3, ad 3). But though it would be fatal to allow that being in its potential condition is evil, St. Thomas does teach that the existence of evil is closely connected with the transition from matter to form which goes on incessantly in the processes of Nature. For, setting aside angels and perhaps the celestial bodies, every finite being exhibits the combination of form and matter, and evil is an accident or incident of finite existence. St. Thomas freely accepts the Aristotelian doctrine of generation, in which the central article is that the *generatio* of one thing must

always involve the *corruptio* of another. When this doctrine was taken to mean that matter was original and uncreated, Christian philosophers were bound to protest; but, given the original creation of matter, one may safely hold that transition from one form of being to another is the universal law of Nature, and from this it follows that every form now actually existing is in a state of potentiality relatively to some other form. Here, then, the notion of *malum* is first revealed. For if the good of every finite thing lies in its actual existence, and if no one form can become actual but by the corruption of some other, it must follow that the *bonum* of one thing entails the *malum* of another. The *bonum aeris*, for instance, is inevitably the *malum ignis*, though both air and fire, as such, are wholly good. Evil is thus a kind of *privatio boni*, not an absolute but a relative privation, as expressed in the following words:—

malum, secundum quod est malum, non est aliquid in rebus, sed est alicuius particularis boni privatio alicui particulari bono adhaerens. (*De Malo*, i. 1.)

All finite things strive after their particular good, and out of this competition evil arises for all in turn: yet the whole remains 'very good', and the image of God is unbroken by the shadows that chase each other over the face of existence. We must be careful, too, not to suppose that the mere fact of finiteness is evil. All particular substances fall short of the perfection of God, but the utmost that can be expected of them is the realization of their particular form, and wherever this is accomplished there is good without admixture of evil.

Now when we consider the term 'evil' in this its first acceptation we shall probably feel that no moral significance can yet be extracted from it. Yet St. Thomas does not refrain from using words which might serve as a first hint of the contrast between right and wrong, and we shall come a little nearer to his meaning if we glance at some expressions employed by him in connexion with the argument that all evil is *praeter intentionem in rebus*. He is speaking at the moment of the difference between a finite thing and Matter as a whole, and writes that

malum quidem in substantia aliqua est ex eo quod deficit ei aliquid quod natum est et debet habere: si enim homo non habet alas, non est ei malum, quia non est natus eas habere:

and then:—

materia autem, cum sit in potentia ad omnes formas, omnes quidem nata est habere, nulla tamen est ei debita, cum sine quavis earum possit esse perfecta in actu. (*S. con. G.* iii. 6.)

From this St. Thomas works round again to the distinction between *malum simpliciter* and *malum alicuius*, but the point of interest is that evil is here said to consist in the privation of something *debitum*. What can be the meaning of *debitum*? Briefly, one must answer that we pass now to a more definitely teleological conception of the universe. God is the *summum bonum*, but since God does not absorb all finite beings into the blank unity of his own existence, but allows every creature to attain to the *summum bonum* by realizing its own perfection, we have to assume the existence of an *ordo* in the universe, wherein every creature has its proper place and its proper relation to the Creator. This *ordo* may be conceived in two ways, either as a system of substances in which each has its peculiar form, or as a process in which all things move towards their appointed end. Evil, therefore, appears in two corresponding ways, distinguished by St. Thomas as *malum in substantia* and *malum in actione*, and the great significance of the latter term is that it leads to the introduction of the word *peccatum*.

Here, in fact, the derivation of evil passes into a new phase. The original and widest sense of *malum* is what St. Thomas describes more particularly as *malum in substantia*, but the term *peccatum* is applicable only to *malum in actione*. Thus every *peccatum* is *malum*, but the converse is not true, and St. Thomas can write:—

malum in plus est quam peccatum, sicut et bonum in plus est quam rectum. Quaelibet enim privatio boni in quocumque constituit rationem mali, sed peccatum proprie consistit in actu qui agitur propter finem aliquem, cum non habet debitum ordinem ad finem illum. (*S.* 1. 2. xxi. 1.)

The conception of *peccatum* brings us a step nearer to the moral sense of 'evil', but stops decisively short of it. When Nature is conceived as a teleological process in which forms are being endlessly brought to birth, there is a constant possibility of some defect in the realization of a form. Nature then produces a *monstrum*, and is actually said 'to sin':—

Natura etiam peccat in sua operatione dum ad debitam dispositionem et formam rem generatam non perducit, sicut cum accidunt monstra in natura. (*Comp. Theol.* i. 119.)

The absence of all reference to conscious reason or intention in this use of *peccare* justifies my statement that the word does not yet bear what we should call a moral significance. Nevertheless we have here the original meaning of the term, and one, moreover, which is never lost. *Peccatum* always means a flaw in some kind of *actio*, relatively to a *debitus finis*; a violation, that is, of some given *ordo*. When the existence of an *ordo* is posited, it is then a matter of objective certainty that every *actio* is either in or out of harmony with it; and all actions not in harmony with the *ordo* must be styled *peccata*, whether intentional, unintentional, or wholly unconscious. Thus in the transition from *malum* to *peccatum* the teleological idea becomes more prominent, but the moral condemnation of evil seems to be still far off.

In order to find, lastly, a sense of 'evil' which will differentiate rational from non-irrational and inanimate creatures, we must attend chiefly to the meaning of the term *culpa*. This will by no means involve the complete neglect of *peccatum*, for St. Thomas sometimes distinguishes between *peccatum in natura* and *peccatum in voluntariis*, and the latter term is practically equivalent to *culpa*:—

si igitur in actionibus non voluntariis ordinatio ad finem defectus accidat, peccatum tantum dicitur; si autem in voluntariis, dicitur non solum peccatum sed culpa, eo quod agens voluntarium, cum sit dominus suae actionis, vituperio dignus est et poena. (*Comp. Theol.* i. 120.)

The three terms, *malum*, *peccatum*, and *culpa*, are thus a simple example of the old logical rule that the extension

diminishes as the intension increases, and St. Thomas exactly sums up the facts in the following statement:—

sicut malum est in plus quam peccatum, ita peccatum est in plus quam culpa. Ex hoc enim dicitur actus culpabilis vel laudabilis quod imputatur agenti. Tunc autem actus imputatur agenti quando est in potestate ipsius ita quod habeat dominium sui actus. Hoc autem est in omnibus actibus voluntariis, quia per voluntatem homo dominium sui actus habet. Unde relinquitur quod bonum vel malum in solis actibus voluntariis constituit rationem laudis vel culpae, in quibusidem est malum, peccatum, et culpa. (*S.* 1. 2. xxi. 2.)

When we have duly appreciated the force of the concluding words, we shall not wonder if there is sometimes a danger of ambiguity in the use of the two wider terms, *peccatum* and *malum*. For when a human act is called a *peccatum*, this would usually mean that it is culpable, and, similarly, when *malum* is applied to human conduct, it is likely to carry with it the sense of both *peccatum* and *culpa*. To keep the terms always perfectly distinct would involve an intolerable degree of pedantry, but the importance of the distinctions can hardly be exaggerated, and whoever fails to remember them is certain to miss the meaning of St. Thomas and equally certain to misapprehend the controversy relating to Dante's *Inferno*.

Suppose, then, one should inquire of Dante whether it was for *malum*, for *peccatum*, or for *culpa* that he sent Farinata and so many fine gentlemen to Hell, I cannot conceive that there should be any hesitation about the answer. Men are not damned for their physical infirmities, for humours bequeathed by their ancestors, nor yet for the sheer performance of acts which, technically, are *peccata*. A deed must be clothed in many qualifications before the *ratio culpae* can be surely detected. However discordant it may be with the *ordo* established by divine or human laws, nothing but the complicity of will and reason can make it a *peccatum morale* (*De Ver.* xxv. 5), nothing else can make it culpable and impart to it the *ratio peccati mortalis*. At times St. Thomas even ignores the intermediate *peccatum*, and divides all human

evil into *malum poenae* and *malum culpae*, these terms being proposed, in the case of rational creatures, as substitutes for the more ordinary *malum* and *peccatum* :—

> sicut in aliis contingit haec duo reperiri, ita et in natura intellectuali quae per voluntatem operatur in qua manifestum est quod inordinata actio voluntatis habet rationem culpae. (*De Malo*, i. 4.)

This would mean that all *peccata* properly belonging to the intellectual nature have the *ratio culpae*. But besides this kind of evil—

> est et in creatura intellectuali invenire malum secundum privationem formae aut habitus . . . et tale malum, secundum fidei catholicae sententiam, necesse est quod poena dicatur. (Ibid.)

The allusion to the Catholic Faith suggests that this way of looking at evil is hardly within the compass of mere philosophy, but though an act of faith is needed to see that all the evil which men suffer can be reduced to *poena*, there is, I think, nothing peculiar to Christian theology in the reduction of all the evil which men do to *culpa*. This would only mean that, in the most accurate usage, no act is a *peccatum* relatively to the agent unless it be deliberate enough to deserve moral censure—a fact that is worth remembering, even though we cannot attempt to dispense with the wider use of *peccatum*.

Our criticism of Witte is by no means completed, but at least we know now how to express the difficulty. What constitutes moral guilt? When and why is *culpa* imputed to a human being? Something of this sort must be the right question to ask, but I am far from supposing that Witte is refuted by the simple answer that *culpa* depends on the state of the will. Whatever his verbal expressions, he cannot really have meant that Dante would condemn a man to eternal punishment merely because he had committed an act which, objectively, was a breach of a certain *ordo*. His true intention was not altogether to ignore the attitude of the will towards the outward act, but to assert that the outward act was requisite for the completion of a bad internal resolution; so that, if two men were equally resolved upon murder, but

one of them failed to accomplish it, their fate would not be the same. I do not say that this doctrine is yet proved incredible, but we ought now to be able to supply whatever is lacking in the proof. For so soon as we admit that the verdict passed upon the sinner hangs upon *culpa*, the final and crucial question is this—Does *culpa*, even of the worst kind, necessitate an external act? Is there any possibility of discriminating between the sin willed but unaccomplished and the sin that comes to outward accomplishment?

The material for a solution is plentiful; for this question was, as it seems, a commonplace of moral philosophy at the time when Dante was a student. We have every reason to believe that the arguments of St. Thomas were representative of tradition, and no reason to believe that Dante can have been either ignorant of an opinion so widely received or anxious to take up a paradoxical position. The case, however, must not be settled by prejudice, and there is some difficulty in presenting it with simplicity, especially as it, after all, proves convenient to take *peccatum* rather than *culpa* as the basis of the discussion. It makes, in fact, no difference whether you inquire directly into the nature of *culpa* or ask what sort of *peccatum* can entail damnation, and for reasons that will appear immediately the usage of the latter term is the more instructive.

Our first proposition must be that no sin can merit punishment unless it be 'actual'. *Peccatum actuale mortale* is the full description of the kind of sin that deserves the pains of Hell, and though there is no objection, in ordinary language, to speaking of *habitus malus*, this is only because certain kinds of habit constantly tend to produce bad actions, and the true doctrine is given in the following statement:—

> Nullus meretur nec demeretur pro habitu sed pro actu; unde contingit quod aliquis est sic fragilis quod si tentatio sibi superveniret, peccaret; qui tamen si tentatio non superveniat, actu non peccat. Nec propter hoc demeretur, quia, ut Augustinus dicit, non punitur aliquis a Deo pro eo quod facturus esset, sed pro eo quod facit. (*De Malo*, ii. 2. ad 9.)

What inference must we draw from words so plain as these?

Superficially they appear to tell entirely in favour of Witte, and at present I shall make only one observation upon that point; which is that every word said here by St. Thomas is exactly as true of Purgatory as of Hell. Unless sin be 'actual' it no more entitles a man to temporal punishment than to eternal. St. Thomas is simply arguing that the *reatus aeternae poenae* is not incurred by any but actual sin; but where the *reatus* is not incurred there is (so far as St. Thomas is concerned) no possibility of getting into Purgatory, for Purgatory is the place set apart for those who, having merited eternal punishment, have afterwards repented and so ensured their ultimate salvation. If, therefore, Hell and Purgatory are to be discriminated, it must be by the aid of some distinction within *actus* itself. The antithesis between *actus* and *habitus* is nothing to the point.

No sin, then, is damnable if not actual, but perhaps I ought to notice an apparent exception and also a doubtful case. The exception, if so it can be styled, is found in the punishment of 'original sin'. Dante's *Inferno* is not much affected by this matter, for we know that those guilty only of original sin are in Limbo, but we may consider very briefly St. Thomas's answer to the question, *utrum omnis poena sit propter aliquam culpam*:—

> si vero loquamur de poena simpliciter, secundum quod habet rationem poenae, sic semper habet ordinem ad culpam propriam; sed quandoque quidem ad culpam actualem, puta quando aliquis vel a Deo vel ab homine punitur; quandoque vero ad culpam originalem. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxxvii. 7.)

The value of this statement is that it specifies, as the only possible alternatives, *culpa actualis* and *culpa originalis*; and with the necessary reservations we may substitute *peccatum* for *culpa*.

The doubtful case to which I have also alluded is that of 'sins of omission'. St. Thomas allows that there are two sides to the question, and some degree of truth in each. Some, he says, have maintained that in every sin of omission there is an *actus*, perhaps only an *actus interior voluntatis*, perhaps also an *actus exterior*. Others reply that the essence of the

sin lies in the abstinence from an *actus*, for that is what is meant by a sin of omission. St. Thomas then reconciles the two opinions. First he admits that—

si consideretur id quod requiritur ad peccatum sicut de essentia peccati existens, sic ad peccatum omissionis non requiritur actus; sed per se loquendo peccatum omissionis in ipsa cessatione ab actu consistit. (*De Malo*, ii. 1.)

That is to say, if sin consists in a breach of some *regula*, and if the *regula* sometimes takes the form of a positive precept, it is the fact of *non agere* which is opposed to the rule. On the other hand—

si consideretur id quod requiritur ad peccatum ut causa peccati, sic oportet quod ad quodlibet peccatum, etiam omissionis, aliquis actus requiratur. (Ibid.)

For if the cause of the sin be external to the agent, there is not really any *ratio peccati*. Hence we must say—

ad hoc quod omissio sit peccatum, requiritur quod omissio causetur ex aliquo actu voluntario. (Ibid.)

Upon due consideration of the whole passage we learn that a sin of omission cannot be regarded as wholly negative, for no moral sin can be imputed to the agent if the cause of the act was other than a voluntary act. Must we not, therefore, infer that the 'act' required in punishable sin need not be more than the *actus interior voluntatis*? For though, if you play cards instead of going to church, there seems to be an *actus exterior*, the sin does not really reside in the card-playing, but in the voluntary act by which you resolve upon a course of action which necessitates the omission of a duty. The sin of omission, however, is a somewhat peculiar case, and it would not be wise to come to any general conclusion upon this evidence alone.

Let us then renew the study of *peccatum actuale*, but with the perception that *actus* itself is a slightly ambiguous word, covering the distinction between *interior* and *exterior*. If we cannot here discover a reason for separating curable from incurable sinners the last stronghold of Witte's theory must fall. Now there cannot be any doubt that in one sense the

external act derives its moral character from the internal. So far, at least, as 'moral' implies the complicity of the agent, the following statement is representative of St. Thomas's teaching:—

si voluntatis sit actus bonus, et actus exterior bonus dicetur; malus autem si ille sit malus; nihil enim ad malitiam moralem pertineret, si actus exterior deficiens esset defectu ad voluntatem non pertinente. (*S. con. G.* iii. 10.)

And again:—

relinquitur igitur quod morale vitium in solo actu voluntatis primo et principaliter invenitur; et rationabiliter cum ex hoc actus moralis dicatur quod voluntarius est; in actu igitur voluntatis quaerenda est radix et origo peccati moralis. (Ibid.)

Yet statements of this kind can hardly settle the position of the *actus exterior*. The will expresses its authority, firstly, in the government of other faculties of the soul and, secondly, in the visible acts performed through the machinery of the body; but since those acts must stand in some relation to the *ordo* established by God or man, may it not be a tenable doctrine that, given the requisite assent of the will, the act then receives its specification from the mode of its external expression? And if so, can the sin be said to be committed when this overt act does not take place? So much accuracy, or even subtlety, is needed for the determination of this point that I shall be obliged to bring forward rather a large array of quotations from St. Thomas.

First of all, I will invite attention to the question, *utrum actus habeat speciem boni vel mali ex fine?* St. Thomas says in reply:—

dicendum quod aliqui actus dicuntur humani inquantum sunt voluntarii. In actu autem voluntario invenitur duplex actus, scilicet actus interior voluntatis et actus exterior: et uterque horum actuum habet suum obiectum. Finis autem proprie est obiectum interioris actus voluntarii; id autem circa quod est actio exterior est obiectum eius. Sicut igitur actus exterior accipit speciem ab obiecto circa quod est, ita actus interior voluntatis accipit speciem a fine, sicut a proprio obiecto. Id autem quod est ex parte voluntatis se habet ut

formale ad id quod est ex parte exterioris actus, quia voluntas utitur membris ad agendum sicut instrumentis, neque actus exteriores habent rationem moralitatis nisi inquantum sunt voluntarii. Et ideo actus humani species formaliter consideratur secundum finem, materialiter autem secundum obiectum exterioris actus. (*S.* 1. 2. xviii. 6.)

Some parts of this statement are already intelligible to us, but the term *obiectum* will have to be used so constantly that I must ask leave to dwell for a moment upon its possible variations in meaning. It is of the nature of reason to propose universal ends to itself, and of will to strive for their attainment. But no ultimate end is independent of the proximate means to it, and no abstract principle can be followed without reference to the concrete and particular. Hence the terms *obiectum* and *finis* are often (though not always) employed to express the difference between proximate and ulterior ends; and sometimes, too, there is a corresponding distinction between *voluntas* and *intentio*. *Voluntas*, however, can cover the whole activity of will, and when St. Thomas says, as above, *finis autem proprie est obiectum interioris actus voluntarii*, he does not mean that the will need always be pursuing an abstract, universal ideal, as such, but rather that the will discerns the ultimate *finis* under the veil of the proximate *obiectum*; or, in simpler language, that the proximate is willed not for its own sake, but only as a means to an end. But when St. Thomas speaks of the *obiectum exterioris actus*, he concentrates his attention upon the immediate aim, upon the particular result of the external act, and, having isolated the outward act in this way, he characterizes it, without relation to the will, by reference, firstly, to some fixed *ordo*, such as the laws of society; secondly, to the special circumstances with which the act is invested at the moment of performance. Lastly, he reflects that if both interior and exterior act are to be specified by their *obiectum*, and if a human action, in its entirety, includes both exterior and interior, there must be some difficulty in fusing the two *obiecta* together so as to give to the act a single character. Then he betakes himself to the distinction between formal and material, and declares that the

finis of the will supplies the formal element and the *ratio moralitatis.*

Important as it is to understand the meaning of this argument, we do not at first seem to get much nearer to removing our main perplexity. When we confine ourselves to the interior act of the will and ask what makes it good or bad, the performance of an external act is, by hypothesis, excluded, and we can say with St. Thomas, *bonitas voluntatis dependet ex solo obiecto* (*S.* 1. 2. xix. 2); that is to say, the *finis* alone determines the moral worth of the act, and overt results are quite irrelevant. But immediately another problem confronts us. For if the *obiectum* can be good or bad, what is it that makes it so? There seems evidently to be a goodness and a badness which is not the creation of the will alone, and therefore we are driven out of the inward world to search for moral qualities inherent in certain acts. Let us therefore try the other starting-point and ask whence comes the goodness or badness of an *actus exterior.* We soon learn that St. Thomas does recognize a double sense of *bonitas*, one of which is independent of the will. External acts, he says, can be called good:—

> uno modo secundum genus suum et secundum circumstantias in ipsis consideratas; sicut dare eleemosynam, servatis debitis circumstantiis, dicitur esse bonum. Alio modo dicitur aliquid esse bonum ex ordine ad finem, sicut dare eleemosynam propter inanem gloriam dicitur esse malum. (*S.* 1. 2. xx. 1.)

Relatively to the *finis*, the external act derives all its goodness or badness from the inward act, but—

> bonitas vel malitia quam habet actus exterior secundum se propter debitam materiam et circumstantias non derivatur a voluntate sed magis a ratione. (Ibid.)

Almsgiving, St. Thomas means, is generically a good act, just as theft is generically a bad act, but when you praise the one or blame the other you assume that certain conditions are fulfilled, without which the act loses its proper character. At first, perhaps, we think that an act must be judged solely *ex ordine ad finem*, but St. Thomas plainly forbids us to ignore the other sense of goodness, and to convince ourselves of this

we need but turn to the next article of the same *quaestio*. St. Thomas insists there that the will cannot attain to its own goodness unless it aim at an object which is good *secundum debitam materiam et circumstantias*, for, as he says:—

ad hoc quod aliquid sit malum sufficit unus defectus; ad hoc autem quod sit simpliciter bonum, non sufficit unum singulare bonum, sed requiritur integritas bonitatis. Si igitur voluntas sit bona et ex proprio obiecto et ex fine, consequens est actum exteriorem esse bonum: sed non sufficit ad hoc quod actus exterior sit bonus bonitas voluntatis quae est ex intentione finis. Sed si voluntas sit mala, sive ex intentione finis sive ex actu volito, consequens est actum exteriorem esse malum. (*S.* 1. 2. xx. 2.)

That a bad intention should suffice to make an act bad while a good intention does not suffice to make an act good may strike us as a curious distinction, but St. Thomas is only developing Aristotle's doctrine of culpable ignorance, and insisting that the failure of reason to discern the right means to a good end is a proof of some defect in the will. We have, however, but little concern with that doctrine at present. The point for us is that the *obiectum* as well as the *finis* must be good, and that the goodness of the *obiectum* is not derived from the will. In this way the external act appears to assume a moral quality which might make its performance or non-performance a matter of real importance. Yet a moment's consideration should dispel the suspicion that Witte's theory has at last found some support. For, however necessary it is to recognize that the external act has a goodness or badness not created solely by its relation to an interior *finis*, Witte's argument is not helped in the slightest degree unless it can be proved that when the bad external act is willed but unaccomplished the agent is not guilty. To prove this is wholly impossible, for everything that St. Thomas teaches on the subject is exactly to the opposite effect. When we come to the question, *utrum actus exterior aliquid addat de bonitate vel malitia supra actum interiorem*, the answer is:—

si loquamur de bonitate actus exterioris quam habet secundum materiam et debitas circumstantias, sic comparatur

ad voluntatem ut terminus et finis; et hoc modo addit ad bonitatem vel malitiam voluntatis, quia omnis inclinatio vel motus perficitur in hoc quod consequitur finem vel attingit terminum. Unde non est perfecta voluntas nisi sit talis quae opportunitate data operetur. Si vero possibilitas desit, voluntate existente perfecta ut operaretur si posset, defectus perfectionis quae est ex actu exteriori est simpliciter involuntarius. Involuntarium autem sicut non meretur poenam vel praemium in operando bonum et malum, ita non tollit aliquid de praemio vel de poena si homo involuntarie simpliciter deficit ad faciendum bonum vel malum. (*S.* 1. 2. xx. 4.)

Rightly interpreted, this passage is fatal to Witte's theory. The first half of it suggests that the external act is essential, but the latter half makes it certain that *voluntas perfecta* is the only title to punishment or reward. If, when the will is firmly set on doing a thing, circumstances prevent the actual performance, the restraint is merely involuntary and the agent is morally guilty of the act. It is idle to reply that Witte is thinking not only of 'lack of opportunity' but of cases when the agent restrains himself in time, for if he does restrain himself, this simply means that *voluntas* is not *perfecta*; and the agent escapes the guilt of mortal sin not because the external act was unaccomplished but because he did not will the sin. In no case does the *ratio culpae* belong to the external act in itself, and if an earthly judge requires the evidence of the overt act, this is merely the misfortune of his position and not a proof that God would be likely to make the same requirement. St. Thomas often allows that the circumstances attending the *actus exterior* may affect the intensity of the will itself, just as some men's courage rises when they come face to face with a dreaded situation, while others lose their courage when the moment of action arrives. But this variation of the will's own intensity under pressure of circumstances has nothing to do with the doctrine that moral guilt depends upon external performance.

In view of the importance of this controversy I will supplement the statements of the *Summa* with one or two passages from other works of St. Thomas. In the Commentary on the *Liber Sententiarum* he debates the same question about the

actus exterior, distinguishes the two kinds of *bonitas*, and concludes with these words:—

et quia ad praemium essentiale ordinatur actus per bonitatem primam, quam habet a voluntate, prout liberaliter redditur et ex amore, ideo actus exterior nihil adiungit ad praemium essentiale: tantum enim meretur qui habet perfectam voluntatem aliquod bonum faciendi quantum si faceret illud . . . (*Sent.* ii, D. xl, q. i. 3.)

The non-performance of the external act will doubtless affect the 'accidental' rewards or punishments, for it is by external deeds that human censure and applause are earned: but only the 'essential' and eternal consequences are relevant to Witte's argument, and these are determined by the interior act alone.

Again: in the *De Malo* we find the question, *utrum peccatum consistat in actu voluntatis tantum*. St. Thomas explains that three opinions have been put forward, (1) that no act, whether external or internal, can be a sin, *sed sola privatio habet rationem peccati*, (2) that sin consists *in solo interiori actu voluntatis*, (3) that it consists *et in interiori actu voluntatis et in exteriori actu*. The third view, he adds, is the most accurate in expression, but each of the three is tenable, if rightly understood. For they are, in truth, not three diverse opinions about *peccatum*, but judgements applicable, respectively, to *malum*, *culpa*, and *peccatum*; and St. Thomas allows that even theologians are apt, *secundum communem usum loquendi*, to confuse the two latter terms:—

qui vero consideraverunt in peccato solum id unde habet rationem culpae dixerunt peccatum in sola voluntate consistere. Sed oportet in peccato considerare non solum ipsam deformitatem sed etiam actum deformitati substratum, quia peccatum non est deformitas sed actus deformis. Deformitas autem actus est per hoc quod discordat a debita regula rationis vel legis Dei: quae quidem deformitas invenitur non solum in actu interiori sed etiam exteriori. Sed tamen hoc ipsum quod actus exterior deformis imputatur homini ad culpam est a voluntate. (*De Malo*, ii. 2.)

Thus in the very moment of deciding that *peccatum* requires the inclusion of the external act St. Thomas puts it beyond

all doubt that the moral culpability of the act is found in the will alone. A little later we read :—

qui enim habet voluntatem dandi eleemosynam et non dat quia non habet facultatem tantumdem meretur quantum si daret, per comparationem ad praemium essentiale. (Ibid. ad 8.)

And once more :—

Si consideratur quantitas demeriti per comparationem ad poenam essentialem, quae consistit in separatione a Deo et dolore exinde proveniente, non minus demeretur qui sola voluntate quam qui actu et voluntate peccat. (Ibid.)

The whole doctrine is summed up in the words :—

Actus interior dicitur esse malus propter actum exteriorem sicut propter obiectum; tamen culpa completur in actu interiori. (*De Malo*, ii. 3, ad 8.)

Further testimony from St. Thomas is superfluous, but I will conclude with a quotation from a less known work, in which the question proposed is *utrum consensus in delectationem sit peccatum mortale.* St. Thomas makes a difference between pleasure *propter ipsam cogitationem* and pleasure *propter rem cogitatam*, illustrating his meaning as follows :—

sic ergo cogitatio potest cogitari ut delectans prout est cogitatio, et sic non est peccatum; sicut si debeo narrare de fornicatione et occurrunt pulchrae viae, et delector. Si autem cogitatio est delectans propter rem cogitatam, impossibile est quod hoc procedat nisi ex amore fornicationis, et ideo consentire in eam est consentire in amorem et in usum rei illicitae, et ideo est peccatum mortale. (*Quaest. Quodl.* xii, art. 33.)

This very curious passage, which shows how one may pass from 'art for art's sake' to—

Galeotto fu il libro e chi lo scrisse,

brings to a conclusion the long series of quotations that have been marshalled in opposition to Witte.

Christianity, Judaism, and secular philosophy thus combine to repel the doctrine that the absence of an *actus exterior* prevents a sinner from being cast into Hell. If we consider what Witte imagines Dante to have done we may well be astonished. For he supposes that a poet holding ardently to

the Christian religion, profoundly versed in moral philosophy, and acquainted with the very depths of human experience, set out to depict the destiny of human souls in the future life: that, desiring to find a just principle for the damnation of incurable sinners, this poet fixed upon the shallow method of earthly law-courts as his pattern, a method which would allow the most infamous scoundrels to look forward to eternal bliss and, on the other hand, might oblige him to deliver over even his friends to eternal torment for offences that would scarcely justify a magistrate in fining a tramp half-a-crown. If any one still thinks this a probable solution of the discrepancy between the *Purgatorio* and the *Inferno*, there certainly cannot be any arguments which would induce him to change his mind. There remain a few criticisms of a different order, and of these the next chapter will treat.

CHAPTER III

FINAL CRITICISMS

HITHERTO, in criticizing Witte, I have offered no test but that of probability. What would seem to be the most obvious question has been frankly neglected, for I have not yet inquired whether there is evidence in the *Inferno* that overtness is necessary to damnation, or evidence to the contrary. But herein I have been guided by Witte himself, who stakes his whole case upon one or two propositions about the capital vices and the nature of everlasting punishment, but does not advance from canto to canto, and from sinner to sinner, as though it were possible to prove in every instance that external action is implied. Moreover, we cannot doubt that Witte was right in refraining from such an attempt: for in no case could it be expected that Dante should for ever be hammering into his readers the principle of eternal punishment and the exact reasons for discriminating between Purgatory and Hell. So, too, it would be quite unreasonable to ask for an undoubted exception to Witte's principle; the truth being that in nine-tenths or more of the *Inferno* there is no evidence on one side or the other. Where there is no mention of overt action we have no right to assume that the crime remained unaccomplished; and where the overtness seems certain we have no proof that Dante would have counted the sinner less guilty if the sinful intention had been frustrated by lack of opportunity. If, however, I were obliged to produce an instance damaging to Witte's theory, I should take refuge in the *palude pingue* and appeal to the

> gente che sospira
> e fanno pullular quest' acqua al summo.
> (*Inf.* vii. 119.)

The account that these sinners give of themselves is this:—

> tristi fummo
> nell' aer dolce che dal sol s'allegra
> portando dentro accidioso fummo (121–123).

Whatever be the correct definition of the sin alluded to in these lines, there is a real difficulty in reconciling the actual state-

ment with the doctrine that only overt offences are punished in Hell. Would it not be easy to argue that so soon as the *accidioso fummo* is converted into visible action the sin must lose its specific character and pass into some other? The *dentro* seems to be essential, and overtness, therefore, impossible. But no one would care to press too hard upon a single instance, and the ingenuity of commentators would doubtless succeed in circumventing so small an obstacle. I shall, therefore, decline to attempt a procession through the *Inferno* in search of direct evidence, and shall return to the consideration of the special facts and principles which Witte alleges in support of his hypothesis.

In order to account both for the disappearance of three capital vices in the *Inferno*, and for the absence of malicious sins in Purgatory, Witte requires us to believe that *superbia*, *invidia*, and *acedia* are only 'propensities'. If this be granted, he can infer that the effects of the propensities are really punished in the three lowest circles of Hell, while in Purgatory the propensities themselves are the important fact and the outward effects fade away. The parallel between Hell and Purgatory will then be as perfect as can be expected, but everything depends upon the acceptance of an account of the capital vices which I believe to be quite untenable. Witte does not exactly assert that three of the capital vices are propensities, while the other four are not: but he implies, at any rate, that some propensities produce effects like to themselves, while others lead to outward acts bearing no resemblance to their inward cause. The result is that the capital vices fall into two classes, divided from each other by the fact that the relation between inward cause and outward effect assumes two different forms, and this division it is that I next propose to criticize.

Once more I shall engage St. Thomas as witness, and with the help of his authority shall meet Witte's doctrine with two propositions, (1) that none of the seven capital vices can rightly be called a propensity or anything of the kind: (2) that whatever their nature, all the seven are of exactly the same order, so that if *superbia*, *invidia*, and *acedia* could not properly be

recognized in the *Inferno*, then neither could the other four. Ambiguity of language is again an obstacle, for neither German words like *Neigung*, *Begierde*, and *Gesinnung*, nor English words like 'propensity' and 'inclination,' can plainly indicate the Latin equivalent by which St. Thomas or Dante would have represented the same idea. But so far as may be gathered from Witte's expressions, he must have ascribed to Pride, Sloth, and Envy a character which the Latin of the thirteenth century would have rendered by *passio*, *inclinatio*, *dispositio*, or possibly *habitus*. It seems a poor kind of argument first to force a technical term upon Witte and then to reject it as technically inappropriate, but no other course is possible. Witte does not explain his own language, because it never occurs to him that any explanation is necessary. Nothing, therefore, remains to his critics but to interpret his meaning, as best they can, in terminology that would have been intelligible to Dante. That Pride and Envy are commonly thought of as dispositions productive of sinful acts I should not dream of denying; but when our business is to understand the place of the capital vices in a moral system we cannot be satisfied with the looseness of colloquial usage.

First, then, let us try the term *passio* as a description of a capital vice. Every one who has even skimmed the pages of Aristotle or Aquinas will admit that a passion, as such, is neither good nor bad: but, without wasting time over so simple a point, I will quote from St. Thomas one or two passages composed with the special object of preventing an error in connexion with the names of the capital vices. For example, St. Thomas puts forward, as a possible 'objection', the following statement:—

> ira est unum de septem capitalibus peccatis et potest esse mortale peccatum, et similiter invidia: ergo passio potest esse peccatum. (*Sent.* ii, D. xxxvi, q. i. 2.)

But the answer is:—

> nomen irae, secundum propriam impositionem, passionem quamdam significat, sed postea transumptum est ad significandum vitium quoddam. (Ibid. ad 2.)

Then after explaining, in the manner of Aristotle, that this use of

words was due to the fact that one extreme is sometimes more violently opposed to the virtuous mean than the other, he adds:—

> Et hoc modo ira secundum quod vitium nominat, non est nomen passionis sed actus vel habitus. (Ibid.)

Parallel to this, though, as it happens, without immediate reference to the capital vices, is a statement in the *Summa*:—

> quaedam vitia innominata sunt, et similiter quaedam virtutes, ut patet per Philosophum. Et ideo oportuit in quibusdam passionibus uti nomine virtutum et vitiorum. Praecipue autem illis passionibus utimur ad vitia designanda quarum obiectum est malum; sicut patet de odio, timore, ira et audacia. (*S.* 2. 2. cxxvii. 1. ad 3.)

Similar observations will be found in connexion with *invidia* and *acedia* (e.g. in *De Malo* x and xi), and it is, in fact, roughly true to say that, wherever the capital vices are under discussion, St. Thomas is careful to warn his readers against confounding them with passions.

But it would be indecent to suggest that Witte was misled by so simple an ambiguity of language. More probably, he looked upon Envy and the rest of them as causes disposing men to sin. They could not, indeed, be capital vices in so far as they were only dispositions; for, in that case, they would not be 'actual', and so could not entail any kind of penance. Still, a sin and its cause may very well be designated by a single name, and there is no doubt whatever that the capital vices may with perfect accuracy be described as causes of sin. They are the *vitia ex quo alia vitia oriuntur*, and the list of them is an attempt to classify the sources to which evil acts can be traced. But in what sense are they 'causes'? For this is the point.

Once again there is a danger of being deceived by the looseness of common language. We are accustomed to use the word 'cause' as though there were only one possible sense of it, and even if we pass from ordinary usage to science there is, in modern times, very little indication in most books of the manifold significance of the term. But in the days of Dante and Aquinas the Aristotelian doctrine, involving four kinds of cause, or, at least, four distinguishable senses of the word, was still accepted by philosophical writers, almost as a matter of

orthodoxy. If, therefore, the capital vices are to rank as causes of sinful actions, it is indispensable to a just comprehension of them that the exact sense of 'cause' should be defined. And what seems so fatal to Witte's estimate of Pride and the others is that he took them to be, in technical language, 'efficient' causes, and this is precisely what they are not. What else can be meant by calling Envy or Sloth 'propensities', but that they are some sort of inward prompting, some instinct, passion, appetite, or inclination, which drives a man on to sinful action in the same sense that steam drives an engine? But St. Thomas, who repeatedly discusses the point, never varies in his affirmation that the capital vices, as the source of wrongdoing, are not efficient but *final* causes; *luxuria*, *avaritia*, and the other five terms being only abbreviated expressions for the possible ends at which inordinate appetite can aim. Men are often ready to commit crimes in which they have no interest except as a means to remoter ends, and because certain ends appear to dominate human action certain vices come to be styled 'capital'. Avarice, for instance, may be a cause of murder, even though the murderer has no ill-will towards his victim but for his being an obstacle to the acquisition of wealth. Undoubtedly, there is a very close relation between the *finis* and the passion inspired by it, but the line of Witte's argument supplies just the one reason that does make it necessary to insist on a strictly philosophical use of terms. He proposes to treat three of the capital vices in a certain way because they are propensities not punishable in themselves: but if the truth is, (*a*) that no capital vice is a propensity or an efficient cause of sin, (*b*) that the *actus interior voluntatis* is (as shown in the previous chapter) enough to ensure condemnation, provided the end willed be bad, what can be said of a theory which shows no comprehension of either of these facts? My own point, however, is not yet sufficiently explained, and I will try to discover St. Thomas's reasons for distinguishing between efficient and final causation in respect of the capital vices.

The question *utrum peccatum unum possit esse causa alterius peccati* is often debated, and St. Thomas holds that one sin

can be the cause of another in every sense of the term. Only the 'efficient' and the 'final', however, need trouble us, and we read that one sin is the efficient cause of another :—

inquantum ex actu peccati relinquitur quaedam dispositio vel habitus in anima, inclinans iterum ad peccatum ; sed hoc modo peccatum non est causa cuiuslibet peccati sed tantum eius quod est simile in specie, sicut luxuria luxuriae, et sic deinceps. (*Sent.* ii, D. xxxvi, q. i. 1.)

Proceeding at once to final causation, St. Thomas says :—

per modum autem causae finalis unum peccatum est causa alterius, inquantum unum peccatum advocat aliud in suum finem ; sicut quando aliquis occidit hominem ut vindictam ex eo sumat, hic ad finem irae, qui est vindicta, advocatur homicidium ; et hoc modo quodlibet peccatum potest ex alio causari, quia etiam potest aliquis actum prodigalitatis exercere ad tempus, ut avaritiae finem consequatur. (Ibid.)

Here we must notice two points, first, that the terms *dispositio* and *habitus* are applicable to the efficient cause, but certainly not to the final ; secondly, that one sin, as efficient cause, can produce only the *same* sin again, whereas *ira*, as final cause, can produce murder or any other sin ; and we even get such paradoxes as that Prodigality should be caused by Avarice. Clearly, then, if the capital vices are propensities, dispositions, or habits, their effects will always be 'like themselves', Envy producing Envy, Anger producing Anger, and so on.

Again : as a preface to an account of the capital vices St. Thomas is wont to examine the two Biblical statements, *radix omnium malorum est cupiditas* (1 Tim. vi. 10), and *initium omnis peccati superbia* (Eccli. x. 15). This he calls the distinction of sins *penes radices*, and in explanation of *radix* he says :—

potest autem actus peccati oriri ex tribus, vel ex alio actu peccati [here he alludes to D. xxxvi, i. 1], vel ex habitu corrupto eliciente actum peccati, vel ex passione seu pronitate ad patiendum ex corruptione naturae consequente. (*Sent.* ii, D. xlii, q. i. 1.)

Then, after pointing out that neither *actus* nor *habitus* is the same as *radix*, he concludes :—

restat ergo ut radix peccati dicatur in nobis vel passio

aliqua vel pronitas ad passionem, quae ex corruptione originalis peccati consequitur. (Ibid.)

The sense of *radix* thus being fixed, St. Thomas arrives soon afterwards at the capital vices, and begins his explanation of 'capital' with these words:—

vitium capitale dicitur vitium ex quo alia vitia oriuntur: unde in hoc differt capitale peccatum a radice peccati, quia capitale peccatum est peccatum quoddam, radix autem peccati non est peccatum, si proprie sumatur. (Ibid. art. 3.)

Next he names the various ways in which one sin can cause another, and if, as before, we attend only to the two more important, we have, firstly, the mode

secundum quod ex actu peccati relinquitur habitus et ex habitu iterum procedit actus; et secundum hanc originem non potest dici vitium capitale, quia hic non est origo peccati ex peccato directe, sed mediante habitu. (Ibid.)

With this is contrasted the mode in which

oritur peccatum ex peccato quod ordinatur in finem illius, sicut cum quis ad habendum pecuniam furatur oritur furtum ex avaritia; et quia in moralibus species est a fine, ideo haec est formalis et completa origo peccati ex peccato, et secundum hanc originem proprie dicitur vitium capitale. (Ibid.)

St. Thomas thus argues that the *cupiditas* which is called *radix omnium malorum* is not the capital vice *avaritia*, and the result is that the terms *passio*, *pronitas ad passionem*, and *radix peccati*, in addition to *habitus* and *dispositio*, are found to be contrasted with the notion of *vitium capitale*. Exactly the same teaching is repeated in the *De Malo*. We are told, on the one hand, that

unum peccatum causat aliud per modum inclinationis inquantum scilicet ex praecedenti peccato causatur dispositio vel habitus inclinans ad peccatum . . . nec secundum hunc modum originis dicuntur vitia capitalia:

and on the other that

unum peccatum causat aliud ex parte finis, inquantum scilicet propter finem unius peccati committit homo aliud peccatum . . . et secundum hoc peccatum causatur a peccato in actu et formaliter; et ideo secundum istum modum originis dicuntur vitia capitalia. (*De Malo*, viii. 1.)

Afterwards, the principle is generalized in this way :—

ubicumque occurrit specialis ratio appetibilis vel fugibilis, ibi est unum vitium capitale ab aliis distinctum. (Ibid.)

That the capital vices are neither passions nor propensities, nor inclinations, nor dispositions, nor habits, and that they are not efficient but final causes, I hold to be indisputable ; and the weightiest consequence of St. Thomas's doctrine is that it completely disposes of Witte's suggestion that *superbia*, *invidia*, and *acedia* are punished in the lowest circles of Hell, not because they are sinful propensities, but because they produce certain sinful effects not resembling the inward causes. For St. Thomas maintains that all sins are classified by reference to their *finis* ; and since all capital vices are *fines*, it follows that when murder, for example, is caused by Envy, there can be no question of punishing the capital vice in the shape of its outward effect : for the act would not rank as murder, but would undoubtedly be classified as an act of Envy. The situation is, in fact, precisely the reverse of what Witte supposed. Arguing that Envy, as a mere propensity, could not be punished in Hell, he thought that thefts or acts of violence caused by Envy could be punished in the circles set apart by Dante for such sins. But St. Thomas teaches that theft caused by Envy does not, except in common parlance, count as a theft : for a reference to the *finis* from which the species of the act is derived will show that the sinner was really guilty of Envy. As he says in a passage quoted already for another purpose :—

id quod est ex parte voluntatis se habet ut formale ad id quod est ex parte exterioris actus . . . unde Philosophus dicit quod 'ille qui furatur ut committat adulterium est per se loquendo magis adulter quam fur'. (*S.* 1. 2. xviii. 6.)

The illustration from Aristotle is a favourite one, and in his commentary on the fifth book of the *Ethics* (cf. *Eth. Nic.* v. 1130 a. 14–32) St. Thomas draws out the distinction between real and apparent *luxuria* :—

Vitium luxuriae proprie ordinatur ad satisfactionem concupiscentiae. Ille autem qui moechatur ut accipiat de alieno non videtur esse luxuriosus, per se loquendo, quia non intendit

luxuriae finem; sed magis videtur esse iniustus, quia propter lucrum contra iustitiam fecit. (*Eth.* v. 3.)

Elsewhere he observes that the intention of a man is the result of a fixed habit:—

Et ideo quando aliquis furatur ut moechetur committit quidem actu peccatum furti, sed tamen intentio procedit ab habitu, et ideo non denominatur fur sed moechus. (*De Malo*, viii. 1 ad 15.)

This does not mean that the habit rather than the act is punishable, but that the habit is the only safe guide to the real nature of a man's intention, or, in other words, that a scrutiny of the habit reveals the true *finis*. The nature of an act remains unknown until its final cause is discovered, and where the acts which Society describes as theft, or murder, or adultery are really caused by Pride, or Envy, or Avarice, it is as sins of Avarice, or Envy, or Pride that a moralist will classify them. This principle is impracticable in an earthly law-court, but that it does hold good in Dante's *Inferno* I have no shadow of doubt. At present, however, I must continue to leave on one side the positive facts of the *Inferno*, and must be satisfied with having proved that Witte has absolutely ignored the whole doctrine of the capital vices, as Dante would have learned it.

If none of the capital vices are propensities, the chief reason for dividing the seven into two classes disappears, and even in the most superficial interpretation of modern words there seems to be very little reason for the particular division suggested by Witte. Why, for instance, should not Avarice be a 'propensity' just as much as Pride? Yet, since every one has his own way of feeling the significance of words, there is no point in making appeals to personal sentiment. All I can do is to issue a kind of challenge, by asserting that from the first to the last page of St. Thomas's philosophy there is not the dimmest hint or suspicion that a division on the lines proposed by Witte is possible. *Invidia* is no more and no less a propensity than *luxuria*, *superbia* no more and no less than *gula*. An identical relation of inward to outward is found in the case of every capital vice. In every case, only actual sin is punished: in every case, the *actus interior* is the measure of the sinner's

guilt: in every case, the *finis* and nothing else must classify the sin. It is useless, too, to reply that Witte does not assert that some capital vices are propensities and others not, but rather that some propensities issue in effects unlike themselves; for St. Thomas teaches nothing more plainly than that a *vitium capitale* differs from a *dispositio* just for the very reason that its outward effects are unlike itself. So far, therefore, as it is true that *ira*, *avaritia*, *gula*, and *luxuria* are productive only of outward acts like to the inward dispositions, so far must we conclude that they are not capital vices. But when Anger gives rise, let us say, to slanderous statements, Avarice to murder, Gluttony or Luxury to waste of money, then the *vitium capitale* is recognized, and at the same moment Witte's theory becomes hopeless. The seven vices are all on the same footing, and if it be a fact that four of them are openly punished in the *Inferno*, while the other three are disguised or omitted, there is nothing whatever in Witte's argument that can help us out of the difficulty. The more we try to interpret him in terms of scholastic philosophy, the more evident does it become that Witte has, in fact, nothing more serious to offer us than the opinion that sinners escape everlasting punishment if, so to say, the police have nothing against them.

The technical objections to Witte's hypothesis need not be elaborated any further, but there is one more general criticism that may reasonably be advanced. If consistency of any kind is to be expected in the *Inferno*, one cannot help asking how it was that, if Dante accepted the legal method by which Society expresses its judgements, he did not also accept the social or legal estimate of the various sins. The earthly judge is at least consistent. He condemns men if overt crimes are proved against them, but acquits them if nothing external be alleged. And having, by force of circumstances, been driven to this simple criterion, he punishes on the same principle; that is to say, he estimates the gravity of offences according to their outward effect upon Society. Murder is worse than lying or cheating because it threatens the security of civic life in a more outrageous manner, and so, with every sort of offence, it is the calculable effect upon Society that human law strives to

measure, and the scale of punishments is in harmony with this principle. But who will assert that it is so in Dante's *Inferno*? Let me quote a sentence from Dr. Moore:—

> It certainly would not occur to any modern moralist to put Usury below Blasphemy, Suicide, or Murder; to say nothing of the position assigned to Alchemy, Forgery, Flattery, Hypocrisy, &c., in a lower depth than any of the above-mentioned sins. But it is not for the children of those who but little beyond living memory visited forgery and sheep-stealing with the same penalty as murder, to 'cast the first stone' at the anomalies of a mediaeval moralist, who is first and above all things a poet. (*Studies in Dante*, 2nd series, p. 182.)

Now, as to what a *moralist* would do, there might be two opinions, but every one will agree with Dr. Moore that the *legal code* of a country would never count Murder a lesser offence than Hypocrisy or Flattery; and this for the simple reason that the law cares for the outward and visible and is content to ignore the rest. Even to hang a man for sheep-stealing is intelligible in some conditions of society, but no such principle can cover the 'anomalies' of Dante's *Inferno*. Making every allowance for the difference between mediaeval Italy and modern England, no one, surely, is prepared to contend that the gravity of sins, as classified by Dante, agrees with the estimate that society passes upon them, whether in the shape of informal judgements or in the formal sentences of a judge. Then why did Dante adopt a certain principle for the purpose of damning his sinners and then refuse to apply it to their punishment? Again it is easy to take refuge in some formula, as that Dante was a poet, or that the circumstances of his life, or of his times, account for some of his estimates, while the rest were perhaps a matter of convenience or even of pure indifference. But as an alternative suggestion, I would urge that the explanation of Dante's arrangement is that he acted as a Christian and not as a man of the world; that it was just because he *rejected* the principle of judging by overt action that he was able to assign to his various sinners positions which, in a social sense, are often absurd. And since Witte has founded his explanation of the *Inferno* upon one legal maxim, I would venture to rest

mine on another. It is taken from St. Thomas and runs as follows:—

In iudicio humano non semper quantitas poenae respondet quantitati culpae: interdum enim infligitur maior poena pro minori culpa, quando gravius nocumentum imminet hominibus ex minori culpa. Sed secundum Dei iudicium gravior culpa graviori poena punitur. (*Quaest. Quodl.* i. 18.)

Here, I believe, is the gist of the whole matter. Society cares only for *nocumentum*; God cares only for *culpa*; and the pregnant words, *gravior culpa graviori poena punitur* might well have been inscribed by Dante upon the gate of his Inferno. He cared nothing for the methods of earthly law courts, but devoted himself to producing the image of Divine Justice, so far as religion and philosophy had made it plain. These, however, are mere assertions and anticipations on my part, and seeing that so many learned and pious men have addressed themselves to the study of Dante, it is almost presumptuous to suggest that Christianity or Christianized philosophy is the key to the *Inferno*. Still, Christianity has taken various shapes in the course of its history, and if the worst comes to the worst we shall be able to ascribe the 'anomalies' of the *Inferno* to the corruption of the Middle Ages rather than to the fact that modern critics have lost sight of Christian principles.

In taking leave of Witte, I must again express my conviction that an analysis and criticism of his opinions is valuable for reasons that go much deeper than a particular controversy. To understand the true nature of *culpa*, to grasp the relation between the internal and external elements in sin, to learn what is meant by a capital vice—these are objects of the highest importance, and objects, too, still far from attainment. Witte failed because he assumed from first to last that there might be a class of sins qualifying the sinner for Purgatory but not for Hell; or because, in other words, he never understood that no kind of sin save *peccatum mortale actuale* concerned him. Now all such sin involves the *reatus aeternae poenae*, but when repentance follows, the *poena temporalis* of Purgatory is substituted for the *poena aeterna*. Repentance takes away what St. Thomas calls the *aversio a Deo*, but it

does not (so far as we can see at present) alter the specific character of the sin. This, at least, is the real problem, and one can hardly pretend that Witte even conceived its existence. Yet since Witte has been attacked so freely I will conclude by pointing out a passage in his essay which perhaps contains the germ of something better than his own theory. Everybody will remember how Virgil reproves Dante for forgetting the Aristotelian distinction between *incontinenza* and *malizia*, but Witte and others have observed that in the *Purgatorio* there is no special recognition of incontinence; or, to speak more accurately, that there was no need to mention sins of malice in Purgatory, since all the dispositions that produce them were being cleansed on the *dilettoso monte*. In close connexion with this, Witte remarks that if we look only at those circles of Hell in which sins of incontinence are punished they do agree in many respects with Purgatory. This correspondence he explains by the fact that sins of incontinence 'do not present a sharp contrast between the sinful propensity and the sin . . . which it prompts; whereas such a contrast does exist when ill-treatment of inferiors is prompted by pride, or robbery by envy' (Engl. Trans., p. 136); and in the same place he says that 'the difference here is only that between desires and their accomplishment, not between the culpable disposition and its essentially different outward manifestations'. The main doctrine implied in these statements is that which we have been compelled to reject, but in so far as Witte means that the sins of incontinence punished in the higher circles of Hell do not bring vividly before us the contrast between the inward and outward sides of sin, he conveys unintentionally a hint of something that is at least worth consideration. For though it be inconceivable that *voluntas completa* should fail to earn damnation, I suggest that the fact of external action becomes more prominent after the eleventh canto of the *Inferno*, and that externality, therefore, may have *something* to do with sins of malice. Dante, indeed, never tells us so, but is it not implied in the nature of the sins? Compare, for instance, Anger and Hypocrisy. When Anger (i. e. desire for revenge) prompts you to damage another man's property, it will make

no difference whether you succeed or not, for in either case, if St. Thomas is to be trusted, you will be accounted guilty of Anger. But in the case of Hypocrisy, is not externality essential to the existence of the sin? For how can there be Hypocrisy when there is no outward pretence? It is not now a question of punishing the outward rather than the inward act, but of the circumstances under which the sin can come into being. Or we may change the illustration for one more puzzling. Suppose, first, that from motives of Anger or Avarice you attempt to kill a man. You will then be punished for Anger or Avarice, whether the deed is accomplished or not. But suppose you try to kill the man simply because you hate him and would fain see him dead: suppose, in fact, that your aim is murder for murder's sake, how far can the external act then be neglected, and how is the sin to be classified? I shall not here attempt to answer these questions, but the fact that they can be asked without absurdity should convince us that the *Inferno* cannot be fully interpreted by the mere principle that *culpa* and *culpa* alone entails punishment. We are only at the beginning of the inquiry, and perhaps we shall find at last that externality is sometimes important, though not in the way imagined by Witte.

CHAPTER IV

THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEW METHOD

HAD Dante himself been less ambiguous in his exposition of moral principles, or had there even been a fairly general agreement among commentators, one could not well have invited scholars to re-examine their opinions about the moral system of the *Inferno*. As it is, the most dogmatic of theorists cannot affirm that the learned world has conspired to accept his theory, and the most optimistic cannot do more than plead that some opinions are more probable than others. In view of this uncertain tone of criticism, I felt justified in reducing all moral interpretations of the *Inferno* to a few distinguishable types, and these, as it seems, have one weakness in common, that if they succeed in explaining the difference between Dante's Hell and Purgatory, they do it at too great a cost. No explanation of the *Divine Comedy* can be acceptable if it puts Dante out of touch with contemporary doctrines, and Witte's theory, which, on the whole, is the most plausible yet invented, would oblige us to assume either that Dante was indifferent to all philosophy and religion, or that he deliberately intended to represent the operation of Divine Justice as an ignorant and cynical farce. As both these alternatives are unpromising, we must needs cast about for a new method. Παντὸς προσθεῖναι τὸ ἐλλεῖπον, says Aristotle, and only an insane arrogance would question the maxim. Yet the value of such a principle depends upon the soundness of accepted methods. When the general direction of a study is accurate, the scholars who follow after will profit by the errors and supplement the deficiencies of their predecessors. But what if the whole direction be wrong? In that case, we are likely to find not a slow and steady emendation of blunders, but a patching and twisting of principles into superficial conformity with the facts, a multiplication of 'cycle and

epicycle, orb in orb', until, if Heaven please to send him, some Copernicus arise to shatter the whole fabric. In one sense, there is little room for a Copernicus in the study of Dante. Did one hear, for instance, of the discovery of some thirteenth-century pamphlet, wherein the whole scheme of the *Divine Comedy* was unfolded, there would be almost as little reason to put faith in the rumour as to examine an American cryptogram purporting to trace the authorship of Dante's poems to Can Grande or Henry the Seventh. The true explanation of Dante must be found, as it were, on the high-road, or it will never be found at all; but since even the most obvious facts and principles sometimes get buried under mountains of learning, a return to some elementary rules of criticism may give us a certain sensation of novelty.

As an initial maxim I would lay it down that the only possible way to understand the moral system of the *Inferno* is to go to the same school as Dante, to study the same authors in the same spirit, and to put aside all knowledge or prejudice derived from the wisdom of a later age. Dante has supplied us with something like a complete list of the philosophies known to him, and even if he had been less liberal in his references, our knowledge of the state of learning in that period would have told us all that we require. We have, too, a mighty host of commentaries, all professing to interpret Dante historically, and all stuffed with extracts from the works of mediaeval doctors. Nevertheless, I shall venture to doubt whether there ever yet has been, in connexion with Dante, an attempt to grasp the principles of moral philosophy in the spirit of the thirteenth century, or to weigh the claims of various authorities in the scales which Dante would have used. Let me illustrate this by a single example. It is agreed that the chief sources of Dante's classification of sins are the philosophies of Cicero and Aristotle and the list of seven capital vices; nor, assuredly, has any commentator got through his business without some allusion to these. But where, on the other hand, can we find even a single expositor who has undertaken to study these three sources in their inter-relation? Is it not assumed, almost invariably, that

if Dante adopted a Ciceronian principle he thereby excluded Aristotle, and that when he took the capital vices as a foundation he must have turned his back on Pagan philosophy? But suppose Cicero and Aristotle were, to Dante's mind, not mutually exclusive but optional authorities for the same system, and suppose that the capital vices were to him only a reiteration of an ancient principle? Merely to suggest such possibilities is to threaten the life of some dozens of commentators. Nor is it of any avail to answer that Cicero was not Aristotle, and that neither of them had ever heard of the capital vices. For nothing could be more fallacious in the criticism of Dante than to take ancient philosophers at our modern valuation. In these days we read Aristotle in Greek (for the present), compare him with the Pre-Socratics and Plato, observe that he had little influence upon Roman thought, praise the Arabians for preserving his writings, lament that the mediaeval Church transformed him into an obstacle to progress, and conclude with a few wholesome reflections upon the enlightenment of modern times. But all this is far removed from Dante, and there can be few surer ways of misunderstanding the influence of Aristotelianism upon the *Divine Comedy* than to start with a critical study of Aristotle's original meaning. Not that I would assert for a moment that mediaeval scholars were incapable of understanding Aristotle, but the fact remains that they read by the light of their own candles, and in an atmosphere other than ours. Mr. Wicksteed has rightly urged us to read Aristotle in the Latin version known to Dante; but far more than this is needed. We must aim at replacing Aristotle and all other writers who might affect the interpretation of Dante in the setting of six hundred years ago. Despite its limited library, the thirteenth century had an ample and varied philosophical tradition. The question is, how it fitted together the manifold elements, and, so far as I know, that question had never been answered by any student of Dante. What we need is not disconnected quotations, but a comprehensive view of all the doctrines current in Dante's time, a view that will embrace Pagan philosophy and Christian theology, and

enable us to understand how any student in the thirteenth century would look upon the nature and species of sin. Where, then, is such a view to be found? The use already made of St. Thomas supplies the answer, but since so large a part of my argument will depend upon the claim of St. Thomas to stand as a court of appeal, I feel obliged to explain rather carefully the principle that has guided me in the matter.

St. Thomas is but one among many authors whom Dante respected. He is the central figure of a distinguished company of sages in Paradise, just as Aristotle presides over the *filosofica famiglia* in Limbo: but almost every one of his companions in glory (to say nothing of the less fortunate Pagans) might be styled a teacher of Dante, nor could the exceptional honour paid to *la gloriosa vita di Tommaso* justify the assumption that no other influence was active in the composition of the *Divine Comedy*. My reason, however, for singling out St. Thomas is not so much that I believe him to have provided Dante with the scheme of the *Inferno* as that he seems to have stood in an exceptional position, I do not say as an original thinker, but as a representative of weighty traditions and as a champion alike of orthodoxy and of intellectual liberty. As to the actual obligations of Dante, no one is likely to challenge Dr. Moore's statement that the poet was 'intimately acquainted' with the writings of St. Thomas; but it is interesting to observe that explicit mention of St. Thomas is by no means common in Dante's works. Dr. Moore gives about a dozen cases in his index, and even if there were double or treble that number, the evidence of 'intimate acquaintance' would, so far, be rather slender. Let me, however, quote a similar instance. The name of Albertus Magnus was famous in the thirteenth century: St. Thomas had received direct instruction from him, and Dante, too, makes considerable use of his books. And yet, as regards Dante, Dr. Moore's index reveals but four mentions of so eminent a name, while, as for St. Thomas, I doubt if in the whole of the *Summa* his master's name occurs. In any case, the explicit admissions of St. Thomas would

never cause us to suspect that in Dante's *Paradiso* he would call Albertus his *frate e maestro.*

To modern notions such silence is surprising and almost dishonest, but the right moral is that we must not dream of estimating the influence of recent writers upon Dante by the number of times that they are mentioned. For we may call it almost a principle in mediaeval citations of authority that an opinion drawn from a recent or contemporary author will be set down, if possible, to one more ancient. Could we ascertain of any particular doctor in the thirteenth century that he had never opened a volume of the ancient authors then held in repute, we still might feel certain, even before looking, that his own treatises would be profuse in references to Seneca and Cicero and Plato, all of which he would have borrowed without acknowledgement from some schoolman more diligent than himself. To some extent this is done in all ages. When we quote Shakespeare we do not feel bound to say that the lines were recalled to us by a newspaper or an essayist; and if, perchance, they come from a play unread by us we are not always expected to confess as much to the public. But the custom of the Middle Ages went far beyond this, and to produce second-hand information as though it were first-hand was simply an accepted convention, a mere acknowledgement of the common opinion that no doctrine could be perfectly respectable unless backed by great names of the past. For this reason it is often impossible to detect the true source of Dante's philosophical opinions. Aristotle may be mentioned fifty times for every one recognition accorded to St. Thomas, and yet one might almost argue that if Dante had never read a word of Aristotle in the (Latin) original, he could have learned the whole of his Aristotelianism from St. Thomas: and, what is more important, he would still, I believe, have introduced every quotation by some such words as *dicit philosophus* or *siccome dice Aristotile.* No one would be so foolish as to allege that Dante's acquaintance with ancient authors was second-hand, but I do maintain most strongly that the influence of St. Thomas upon Dante must be looked for not in the scattered passages where his

name is mentioned, but in Dante's interpretation of older philosophers and in his general method of handling moral problems.

Returning now to my main contention, I say that St. Thomas can be taken as a criterion because a knowledge of his writings amounts to a knowledge of practically all the traditions which can have affected the *Divine Comedy*. In one or two cases, such as that of Bonaventura, the lapse of a generation would have made some difference, but it remains true that all the schools of philosophy known to Dante had been already utilized by St. Thomas, not only in their particularity, but as elements in a perfected system. St. Thomas, in fact, represents a certain *method* of studying Pagan and Christian traditions, and though, possibly, the method was so common that Dante might have become familiar with it without the assistance of St. Thomas, the admitted fact that he did look upon St. Thomas as a high authority makes it unnecessary to indulge in conjecture. Another misunderstanding must also be prevented. For if it is chiefly as a mirror of antiquity that St. Thomas is so important, we shall seldom be concerned to distinguish between the newer and older elements in his system. In preceding chapters I have sometimes quoted St. Thomas as the author of opinions which, in point of fact, had existed for centuries before him, and I shall often do so again. Were I composing a history of mediaeval philosophy, there would be sound reasons for greater accuracy in such matters, but for our main purpose the question of origins is mostly irrelevant. Therefore, when opinions are ascribed to St. Thomas, this will not mean that St. Thomas invented them, but that he accepted them and gave them the sanction of his personal judgement. There is a doctrine of political philosophy that a law, however ancient and venerable, has authority only because the existing sovereign commands it; and there is a similar sense in which doctrines established for centuries may count as part of St. Thomas's teaching. If Dante often appeals to ancient authorities when actually it was St. Thomas who taught him; so we, for our part, shall constantly speak of St. Thomas when historical accuracy

would bid us substitute the name of Aristotle or Augustine or Gregory. Antiquity is known to Dante only in its mediaeval disguise: the present has authority for him only as founded upon the past. We also must make this fusion of old and new, and must take St. Thomas as the embodiment of both.

No one will formally question the importance of studying St. Thomas, but the fact which has usually failed to secure practical recognition is that St. Thomas is the author of a *system*. To this system the *Divine Comedy* must necessarily bear some relation, and though the proposition that *A* must either agree with or differ from *B* is not very impressive in the abstract, yet when *A* is a poem like Dante's and *B* is a great moral system composed only a generation earlier, even a logical platitude becomes interesting. Dante took the whole host of sinners and arranged them according to the nature and gravity of their offences. Suppose, then, that the same sinners had been handed over to St. Thomas for punishment, in what kind of classes and gradations would he have ordered them? St. Thomas, I imagine, would have found very little difficulty in such a task. Had he been obliged to squeeze the sinners into the exact number of circles and sub-divisions imagined by Dante, he might have felt some embarrassment: for Dante consults his own artistic convenience, and could probably have made many alterations in detail without any change of moral principle. But as regards the broad grades of iniquity and the list of sins named in the *Inferno*, there is little doubt that St. Thomas's opinion is ascertainable, especially as his main doctrines of good and evil are expounded not less than three or four times in the course of his writings. Surely, then, it is worth while to do this, whatever the result may be? Dante may agree with St. Thomas or may differ from him, but either fact must be significant, and perhaps we shall learn as much from divergence in some respects as from identity of treatment in others. We cannot, however, expect to follow too simple a plan. To take Dante's sinners one by one and fit them into St. Thomas's system, or to take St. Thomas's classification of sins and adapt it immediately to the *Inferno*, would be too superficial a method. The only course likely to satisfy the

demands of criticism is to turn right away from the *Divine Comedy* until the whole moral system of St. Thomas has been studied, at least in its general outline. Dante himself was not allowed to climb the delectable mountain until he had been down into darkness, and in leading the reader by a circuitous road I must hope that he too will acknowledge eventually that

non v'era altra via
che questa per la quale io mi son messo. (*Purg.* i. 62.)

The subsequent comparison between Dante and St. Thomas will perhaps be rendered easier if I insert here a very brief sketch of the materials for the construction of a moral system, as they existed in the latter half of the thirteenth century. My object is not to compress a history of mediaeval thought into a few paragraphs, but to show that the question of contact between Dante and St. Thomas is not equally momentous in all cases. In some matters ignorance of St. Thomas would scarcely have made any difference; in others its effect might have been remarkable: and just for the sake of rough illustration I will reduce all the materials which Dante must have utilized to three distinguishable traditions, one wholly Christian in its nature, another representing a fusion of Pagan and Christian thought, the third as purely Pagan as anything could be in the Middle Ages.

(1) By the purely Christian tradition I understand, in the first instance, that conception of right and wrong in human actions which would technically be known as theological. The Christian Church did not forget our Lord's declaration that He came 'not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it', and the general spirit of Christian teaching was in accordance with the words of St. Paul, 'the Gentiles which have not the Law do by nature the things contained in the Law.' In other words, the rule of life enjoined upon Christians was not advertised as a miraculous invention, but claimed rather to be a loftier version of the moral law discerned already by Jews and Gentiles. On the other hand, it was never doubted that the new law had advanced far beyond the old; the 'theological' virtues were of a higher order than the 'moral': and, to

speak generally, the doctrine of Grace had exalted the whole idea of human life to a point beyond the outlook of secular reason. Thus Dante might, if so it had pleased him, have treated all sin from the theological standpoint, allowing moral philosophy, in the proper sense, to fall into the background. Again, we may place under the head of Christian tradition all the moral instruction which a constant reader of the New Testament would derive from the Gospels and Epistles. I do not say that this would necessarily differ from other moral teaching, but books within the Canon are so evidently peculiar to Christianity that their influence is likely to be unique. Imagine, then, that there was no actual contact between St. Thomas and Dante in respect of theological or distinctively Christian conceptions of good and evil, ought we then to infer that St. Thomas would be useless as an aid to the interpretation of Dante? Such an inference would be almost ludicrous. The slowly developing tradition of Christian society, assisted now and again by some theologian of exceptional powers or by the intervention of ecclesiastical authority, would enfold both St. Thomas and Dante. The same forces would mould the judgement of both philosopher and poet, and even the eccentricity of genius could not carry them far apart. We need, therefore, take no great pains to prove that St. Thomas as theologian did influence Dante, but neither need we hesitate to assume that the moral theology of Dante will be broadly the same as that of St. Thomas.

(2) Beyond the limits of theology a mediaeval student would find himself in possession of a considerable body of literature in which problems of moral philosophy were treated as secular matters, which Pagans, Jews, and Christians might discuss in common. There were Pagan authors, like Cicero and Seneca, and Christian authors, like Augustine and Gregory, and history justifies us in placing these in the same class. For long before the days of St. Thomas, at a time when the Roman world had hardly begun to call itself Christian, an amalgamation between Pagan and Christian thought had been so far effected that no intelligent doctor of the Church would have denied that Cicero, for instance, was

something of an authority on the cardinal virtues and other tenets of moral philosophy. In later centuries, too, the labour of scholastic thinkers drew a clear line between moral philosophy and theology, and the more sharply those provinces were divided the less reason was there for extolling the moral teaching of Christian fathers at the expense of ancient philosophers. The existence of a moral tradition derived from an early reconciliation of Pagan and Christian thought is a fact to be remarked by students of Dante, and because there was such a tradition we may again feel confident that Dante's views upon many of the deepest moral principles will be discoverable in the pages of St. Thomas, even though we may have no evidence that Dante borrowed anything directly.

(3) The third source of moral doctrines comprises, in truth, nothing more than the works of Aristotle. To modern notions Aristotle is not thus isolated, for why should he be reckoned more Pagan than Cicero or Plato, or any other unconverted heathen? But consider the bare facts of chronology. The new translations began to make their appearance in Europe about the close of the twelfth century or the beginning of the thirteenth; and when St. Thomas was born the struggle of Aristotle for admission to the University of Paris was by no means concluded. These writings, physical, metaphysical, and moral, which had been without active influence upon Latin thought for more than a thousand years, were not unnaturally a cause of turmoil, and the mere existence of that turmoil obliges us to separate Aristotle from other Pagan authors. His doctrines of matter and the soul were novel and dubious, and Averroes had shown that they could be interpreted in a sense hostile to Christian beliefs. The moral treatises were far less controversial, but at least they were new and remarkable, and if Aristotle had seemed to contradict other moralists of sound reputation, the learned world would certainly have been embarrassed, and the cry of danger might have been raised. In all these ways, therefore, Aristotle came as a stranger and a Pagan, and at first it was very uncertain whether he would be cast out into the wilderness or received into the society of the philosophers whose moral teaching had

long been accepted. Now St. Thomas, emulating and improving upon the work of Albertus, was the most effective instrument in determining the fate of Aristotle. Believing that the Arabian interpretation of Aristotle was distorted and untenable, he saved the situation by a genuine effort of criticism, and defeated the rationalist sceptics by a further appeal to reason.

All these facts have been related many times by historians, and I mention them not as though they were novel, but because they should convince us that the relation of Dante to St. Thomas has greater interest in respect of Aristotle than in any other way. Had Dante remained in ignorance of St. Thomas's method of exegesis, the intrusion of Aristotle into the *Inferno* might have produced the most curious results. Heresy and positive error would no doubt have been avoided, but in purely philosophical questions the lack of St. Thomas's help must have made a great difference, and we certainly should have no right to assume that in matters like the classification of the vices, or the fusing of Aristotle with other philosophies, there need be agreement between St. Thomas and Dante. As to the facts of the case, there is no sort of doubt that Dante did study Aristotle under the guidance and in the spirit of St. Thomas. I pass over direct allusions to St. Thomas's commentary on the *Ethics* (*Conv.* ii. 15. 125 and iv. 8. 3), for the evidence of these is scarcely needed, and, for that matter, St. Thomas reveals the nature of his interpretation less clearly in the actual commentaries on Aristotle than in his general treatises. We have but to assume that Dante knew the *Summa*, the *De Malo*, or the commentary on the *Liber Sententiarum* in order to feel certain that the resemblance between his Aristotelianism and that of St. Thomas is no accident. And, indeed, the positive resemblance is too striking for the suggestion of accident to be plausible. If, however, the influence of St. Thomas upon Dante is more important in respect of Aristotle than in any other respect, this same novelty of Aristotle's doctrines would leave him greater liberty of private interpretation. When, therefore, I urge that St. Thomas is the best criterion of what Dante

is likely to have taught in the *Inferno*, and when I add that this criterion will have its highest value in regard to the interpretation of Aristotle, I am not implying that Dante was obliged to agree rigorously with St. Thomas in his manner of using the *Nicomachean Ethics*. A difference of opinion upon fundamental principles of morality I confess to regarding as inconceivable—hence the objection to Witte's theory—but with regard to all secondary questions I postulate only that a comparison of Dante with St. Thomas is certain to yield interesting results.

CHAPTER V

THE METHOD OF ST. THOMAS: AUTHORITY AND TRUTH

THE more we realize the identity of the materials at the disposal of Dante and St. Thomas, the more imperative is it to consider the question of method. For unless we can feel assured that the general procedure of the two men was likely to be the same, the fact of some positive resemblances between them will be of no great significance, and the points of positive difference will certainly remain unexplained. That two men bred in the same traditions should sometimes agree in their explicit doctrines is inevitable, but an agreement in method has this superior interest, that it may also account for a measure of dissimilarity. I shall, however, hold fast to the principle announced in the previous chapter, and bestow, at present, as little attention as possible upon Dante. Apart from all thought of the *Divine Comedy*, the method by which St. Thomas puts together his system is hardly less important than the system itself.

The Middle Ages have still a fine reputation for intolerance, and it would be a pity to spoil the flavour of hanging and burning with which the efforts of romance have endowed them. Scholastic philosophers in particular have a name for the worst kind of dogmatism, so that if I were to begin by affirming that the method of St. Thomas displays a sanity of judgement and a breadth of intellectual charity to which there is almost no parallel, only the comparatively few persons who have made a special study of the question would credit me with a serious intention. But, happily, I am under no obligation to make out a case for St. Thomas, and only because the natural course of the argument points in that direction am I led to make certain reflections upon his attitude towards other philosophies. For the popular view of the Middle Ages is so far correct in its

intimations that it dwells much upon the idea of Authority, and no one can enter into the spirit of St. Thomas without grasping his notion of Authority and its varying relation to Reason. This, indeed, is what I mean primarily when I say that an understanding of St. Thomas's method is quite as valuable as a contemplation of his finished system. In every part of his writings St. Thomas is manifestly making use of earlier authorities. Open any one of his books at random and you will not read a dozen pages without coming upon allusions to more than a dozen writers, inspired or ecclesiastical or secular: nor will you be able to help wondering whether in all this St. Thomas is making a bald appeal to authority or arriving at a personal judgement through a critical sifting of other opinions. Ultimately, perhaps, the antithesis between Reason and Authority is fallacious, for neither the profession of universal doubt, from which some philosophers have started, nor the solemn enthronement of experience, with which others console themselves, can hide from us that every kind of argument is, in the end, an appeal to the authority of some one or something. Yet to assume the law of contradiction is not the same thing as to invoke the authority of Aristotle; nor is St. Thomas one who would forbid the distinction between Authority and Reason, or, to express it otherwise, the distinction between different kinds of authority. There must always be a criterion, but what is the right criterion in any given case?

Now since all argument is impossible unless the parties to it admit some common basis, we must allow that the first step in any discussion is the determination of its proper sphere. Whether it be the truth of the Christian faith, of an astronomical theory, of a moral precept, or of an aesthetic judgement that you would champion, you must either find a criterion acceptable to your adversary or wish him good-morning and depart. But at once there is a complication, for the nature of Truth is one thing and the nature of an individual another. Religion and Philosophy, for instance, may have to teach kinds of truth so distinct in their nature that different modes of apprehending them will always be necessary. But there is another sort

of difference, as when, for example, you would argue about the doctrine of the Trinity with two men, one a professing Christian, the other a Deist. Here the Christian accepts the articles of faith or the authority of the Church as a criterion, and if you can persuade him that his opinion is contrary to these he will give way: but the Deist admits only the existence of God, and his antagonist can only argue, without appeal to inspired declarations, that the Unity of God is consistent with a Trinity of Persons. I must, however, be careful not to slander St. Thomas by imputing to him the fatal doctrine that there is no unity in the many sides of Truth. To him the unity and coherence of all Truth is as certain as the Unity of God—nay, it is but one manifestation of the God who is Himself the Truth. That a doctrine could be true for Faith and false for Philosophy he would utterly deny: but he does distinguish between things within the capacity of unaided human reason and things without it, and perceives that the nature of the appeal to authority must vary accordingly. If, then, I have spoken of different kinds of truth, I mean only that there are some limitations to which the whole human species is liable—no human being, for instance, can demonstrate the fact of the Incarnation—and that these limitations may conveniently be distinguished from the special limitations of time, place, education, or prejudice which affect individual members of the species. As St. Thomas says :—

> dico autem duplicem veritatem divinorum, non ex parte ipsius Dei, qui est una et simplex Veritas, sed ex parte cognitionis nostrae, quae ad divina cognoscenda diversimode se habet. (*S. con. G.* i. 9.)

The difference between revealed and unrevealed truth justifies the expression *duplex veritas*, but even where the appeal to revelation is admittedly suspended, the way in which reason itself is brought to bear upon a pupil or an adversary must be adapted to his individual circumstances, and we shall see that many questions about Authority in a secondary sense may here be raised.

The gradual descent from *auctoritas* to *ratio humana* can be conveniently illustrated by an analysis of the different methods by which St. Thomas proposes to defend the truth of the

Catholic Faith against different classes of persons. At the beginning of the *Summa* he asks whether it is possible for the *sacra doctrina* to argue at all. For argument must be either *ex auctoritate* or *ex ratione*; but, as to authority, Boethius says *locus ab auctoritate est infirmissimus*, while, as to reason, Gregory says *fides non habet meritum ubi humana ratio praebet experimentum* (*S.* 1. i. 8. obj. 2). In reply, St. Thomas allows that the *sacra doctrina* does not undertake to prove its own first principles, the *articuli fidei*; and in this it only resembles every other science. But whereas the natural sciences assign to Metaphysics the task of defending their *principia*, theology has no more fundamental science to fall back upon and must follow the metaphysical method of defending itself. This method St. Thomas explains in these words:—

> metaphysica disputat contra negantem sua principia, si adversarius aliquid concedit: si autem nihil concedit, non potest cum eo disputare; potest tamen solvere rationes ipsius. (*S.* 1. i. 8.)

Theology must proceed in the same way. If the adversary accepts any part of the divine revelation he can be met on that basis, but:—

> si nihil credat eorum quae divinitus revelantur, non remanet amplius via ad probandum articulos fidei per rationes sed ad solvendum rationes, si quas inducit contra fidem. (Ibid.)

If by its very nature the Christian faith cannot be proved to be true, this is conclusive evidence that it cannot be proved to be false. Hence to one who starts with the conviction that there can be no real conflict between one form of truth and another:—

> manifestum est probationes quae contra fidem inducuntur non esse demonstrationes sed solubilia argumenta. (Ibid.)

In other words, the Christian and the Pagan must meet on the common ground of human reason, but even there the Christian has no positive arguments, but must await his

opponent's attacks. The saying of Boethius about authority St. Thomas modifies as follows:—

licet locus ab auctoritate quae fundatur super ratione humana sit infirmissimus, locus tamen ab auctoritate quae fundatur super revelatione divina est efficacissimus. (*S.* 1. i. 8. ad 2.)

This is equivalent to saying that Authority is effective only where divine revelation is admitted, and yet, at the same moment, we catch a glimpse of another sort of *auctoritas*, which is not essentially opposed to reason but, apparently, within its sphere. The authority criticized by Boethius is, in fact, not the authority which the Church and the canonical books possess for believers, but the authority claimed by philosophers or others in respect of matters which human reason is competent to discuss. Now this authority of the secondary order is of high importance to all who would understand the method of St. Thomas, and when he seems partly to endorse the opinion of Boethius we certainly must not infer that the authority claimed for ancient doctors and philosophers is altogether to be despised.

Let us once more contrast the believer and the unbeliever. Between orthodoxy and the total unbelief of a Gentile there are, no doubt, intermediate stages. There is the heretic, who accepts the *principia* of the Faith but denies some of their consequences, and there is the Jew, who accepts the Old Testament but refuses to see in it the promise of the New. But I think we can afford to omit all but the extreme cases, for those will sufficiently reveal the difference between the two kinds of *auctoritas* and the extent to which the inferior kind can be valuable. The orthodox Christian, then, allows the authority of the *articuli fidei*, and for him it can never be of vital importance to decide whether any special respect is due to the utterances of any human being. Let a man be as learned and as saintly as is possible in this world, his teaching will not on that account be binding upon the conscience of any Christian. St. Thomas takes up the position of Augustine, who draws a clear line between canonical books and all other writings. Canonical books are without error, but, says Augustine:—

alios ita lego ut, quantalibet sanctitate doctrinaque praepolleant, non ideo verum putem quod ipsi senserunt vel scripserunt. (*S.* 1. i. 8. ad 2.)

Nevertheless, any article of faith and any passage of Scripture may cause difficulties of interpretation, and the natural refuge of those in doubt will be the doctors of the Church. Moreover, the *sacra doctrina* does not aim only at commenting upon the creeds and sacred books, but strives to contemplate all human life and even the whole universe from a certain point of view. In a task of such magnitude the theologian will require all the assistance he can get from human reason, and one form of assistance is the study of philosophical traditions. Eventually, therefore, St. Thomas arrives at three grades of authority:—

(1) auctoritatibus canonicae Scripturae utitur [sc. sacra doctrina] proprie, ex necessitate argumentando:
(2) auctoritatibus autem aliorum doctorum Ecclesiae quasi arguendo ex propriis, sed probabiliter:
(3) auctoritatibus philosophorum ubi per rationem naturalem veritatem cognoscere potuerunt . . . sed tamen huiusmodi auctoritatibus utitur quasi extraneis argumentis et probabilibus. (Ibid.)

The enlightened rationalist will observe that, so far, St. Thomas virtually identifies *ratio humana* with *auctoritas philosophorum*, but he must beware of concluding that St. Thomas wished to crush independent thought under the weight of tradition. For, as hinted already, we must remember that the whole activity of the *sacra doctrina* consists in making deductions from certain admitted assumptions: it has no direct interest in such questions as may cause a real antithesis between *ratio humana* and the authority of past philosophies, but calls in the aid of reason only when probable arguments have to be substituted for demonstration. But where probability rather than proof is in question, there can be no doubt that the tendency of previous opinions is an argument that must not be ignored. The appeal to philosophical authority is a feeble argument only when the whole standpoint of the *sacra doctrina* is abandoned, and when the tests of logic or natural science are applicable.

We may now pass to the unbeliever and suppose ourselves in the position of one who would defend the Faith *contra Gentiles*. Authority in the primary or ecclesiastical sense is now finally left behind, and the adversary must be met upon ground common to all men, yet especially opposed to the advance of religion, for the reason that the only way of progress is by the elimination of contrary errors. St. Thomas discerns two difficulties, the first :—

quia non ita sunt nobis nota singulorum errantium dicta sacrilega ut ex his quae dicunt possimus rationes assumere ad eorum errores destruendos. (*S. con. G.* i. 2.)

Here, too, he notes his own disadvantage as compared with earlier defenders of the Faith, who had either themselves been Pagans or, at least, had been trained in Pagan doctrines and so could understand their opponents. The second difficulty is :—

quia quidam eorum, ut Mahumetistae et Pagani non conveniunt nobiscum in auctoritate alicuius Scripturae . . . unde necesse est ad naturalem rationem recurrere, cui omnes assentire cogantur; quae tamen in rebus divinis deficiens est. (Ibid.)

Now when there is no *scriptura* whose authority both parties admit, there is all the more need to consider how far the secondary authority, such as belongs to philosophers of ancient fame, can claim to represent *ratio humana*, and how far it is mere usurpation. In the absence of divine authority, can there be any other court of appeal? One may approach the answer to this question by a brief comparison between the *Summa Theologica* and the *Summa contra Gentiles*. The former book, written with the assumption that the articles of the Faith are true, treats all subjects *sub ratione Dei*; but the latter was composed in a different spirit, and, making no appeal to sacred books, it sets out to assail by philosophical arguments those who profess to reject the Faith on philosophical grounds. At a first reading, therefore, we are probably surprised to find that in large sections of the book the verdict of Aristotle seems to be regarded as infallible; and a modern critic will ask, not unnaturally, whether this is what St. Thomas

understood by *ratio humana.* Yet the explanation is perfectly simple, for the greatest controversies between St. Thomas and contemporary or recent Gentiles were, by hypothesis, controversies about the meaning of Aristotle: and even when there was no immediate occasion for controversy the authority of Aristotle upon certain matters was practically an admitted basis. Thus for St. Thomas, when arguing against the Arabians, to spend time in discussing the value of Aristotle's opinions would have been quite as foolish as for two orthodox Christians, who might chance to be arguing about some minor point, to begin by labouring to convince each other that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. The Arabians produced the philosophy of Aristotle and said, as it were, 'you must either refute Aristotle or abandon certain Christian beliefs': but St. Thomas replied, 'we will do neither the one nor the other, but we will expound the true meaning of Aristotle and prove that it does not conflict with the Faith.' What, then, could possibly be more uncritical than to complain of St. Thomas for his constant invocation of Aristotle?

At this point, however, we reach a new phase of the argument. St. Thomas was perfectly right to appeal to Aristotle, and no other mode of controversy would have been sensible, but this does not enable us to form a general estimate of *auctoritas philosophorum* relatively to the lawful pretensions of *ratio humana.* May it not be true that in many cases neither Aristotle nor any one else has a right to speak with authority? To debate this problem in the abstract is not my business; but, as regards St. Thomas, I shall make two assertions, first, that the idea of stifling discussion by force of authority would simply have disgusted him; secondly, that the place of Authority in philosophical arguments must vary so immensely according to circumstances that it would be idle to lay down any general maxim as though it would always hold good. The former assertion I shall not stop to justify, but the latter I will illustrate by pointing to two causes of variation, namely, (1) the past history of controversies and their particular form at the time when St. Thomas was teaching, (2) the inherent differences between one department of

philosophy and another, as, for instance, between Geometry and Ethics.

(1) The history of philosophy, as known to St. Thomas, was full of disputations and conflicts. There were battles of antiquity, some of them almost forgotten; battles of the earlier Middle Ages, still continuing, if with diminished ardour; and battles, lastly, of St. Thomas's own generation, such as had been aroused by the re-appearance of Aristotle. A brief comparison of these different types of controversy will show how impossible it is to maintain always the same attitude towards the authority of philosophers. Look, first of all, at that famous problem about the origin and nature of evil. I have allowed in an earlier chapter that this difficulty is for ever recurring, yet the greater struggles about it had been concluded in the early ages of the Christian Church, the arguments on both sides had been exhausted and a practical decision had been made. Under such circumstances, a philosopher is justified in treating a controversy as a *chose jugée* and in abiding by the results roughly established, until, at least, some intellectual or moral revolution brings the question once more to the front. Thus whenever St. Thomas finds occasion to expound his doctrine of evil, it is but natural that he should pay deference to history and reproduce the arguments of earlier generations. Any other course would, in truth, have been uncritical and as unfair to one side as to the other; for there could be little doubt that all the strongest arguments both for and against a separate principle of evil had been employed in the first centuries of the Christian era. This controversy, therefore, St. Thomas treats as one of earlier date: it is not true that his own judgement is formed merely in subservience to others, but it is true that his arguments are mostly those invented long before his own time. Turn, next, to the conflict between Nominalists and Realists. Here the mists of antiquity had not yet enveloped the battle-field, but it would be a grave mistake to imagine that any theory of 'universals' could avoid the appeal to Authority. For what fact was more important in the whole dispute than the supposed opinions of ancient logicians? The Introduction

of Porphyrius to the *Organon* had forced Aristotle into the arena long before the major part of the *Organon* was recovered, and the doctors of Paris or Oxford could not but regard the arrival of the new writings as something like the appearance of a judge. St. Thomas would, therefore, have no choice but to parade the authority of Aristotle, for had he declined to do so, his critics would instantly have triumphed over him, one set of them arguing, perhaps, that St. Thomas's own opinions were untenable, another that the works of Aristotle ought to be burnt. Thus in this instance also we see that the method of controversy was fixed by its previous history. Lastly, we may choose an example belonging to the actual generation of St. Thomas—the question of personal immortality arising out of the Arabian doctrines of the soul. If either Avicenna or Averroes were to be trusted, there was no room for a belief in the survival of the individual soul, and the Christian faith was threatened at an important point. Now here we have a controversy which, however modern in its immediate aspect, was as clearly dependent upon Authority as any other known to St. Thomas. For the Arabian doctrines of the active and passive intellect professed to be derived from a celebrated passage in Aristotle's *De Anima*, and since St. Thomas believed the Arabian interpretation to be mistaken, his defence of personal immortality was inevitably conceived from that point of view. And so, whether we examine the ancient, the partly ancient, or the most modern problems discussed by St. Thomas, we are always obliged to confess that his frequent appeals to Authority are not treachery to the sacred cause of Reason, but a recognition of the real nature of the difficulties confronting him.

(2) The differences between the several branches of philosophy are manifold, but since the comparison between St. Thomas and Dante relates almost entirely to moral philosophy, it will be enough to make a few remarks upon the nature of that particular study. One or two heroic intellectualists have proposed an identical method for Geometry and Ethics, and not a few have professed rather vaguely that moral philosophy is amenable to a strictly scientific method. But no one will

be surprised to learn that St. Thomas has no such anticipations. His main principle is that the value of opinion increases as the possibility of proof is diminished, and this principle, which has served already to differentiate philosophy as a whole from faith, will also serve to mark the degrees of certainty in different departments of human knowledge, and will suggest that in moral philosophy, if anywhere, the firm traditions of human thought and human experience ought to count as a weighty argument. So much even the most fervent enthusiasts for science have often admitted, and Bacon, who looked upon general consent in intellectual matters as *pessimum augurium*, was inclined to make an exception in favour of *divina et politica*. For St. Thomas, however, *divina* and *politica* will not be coupled so closely together; for it is evident that no doctrine of moral philosophy attains to the dogmatic level. Nothing is received upon Authority in the higher sense of the word: the *lex naturalis*, which is the prime source of morality for human beings, is revealed to Gentiles no less than to Christians, and it is, indeed, an essential part of the Christian position that the moral law should be assumed as a foundation, not put forward as part of a creed. There is, therefore, no moral precept that St. Thomas or Dante or any other believer would be compelled by religious obligation to teach. But while Authority of the higher sort is irrelevant, Authority of the second order reaches here its maximum of importance. The practical need for Authority in moral matters is clear to every one, and also the fact that tradition does in practice outweigh a great deal of ingenious argument. A clever scepticism may doubtless refute the reasons with which the ordinary man defends morality, but conviction survives the triumphs of logic; Cephalus continues to be honest, and Thrasymachus does not persuade respectable citizens to swindle their neighbours or beat their wives. Nor is it a long step from common experience to philosophy, for the uncritical habit of society is only an embodiment of the principle to which I have called attention, that where logical deduction is least feasible, the authority of opinion is at its height. Because the *lex naturalis* is impressed on the soul of every man, every

man's opinion is worthy of attention. It does not follow that moral practice ought to be dominated by sheer individualism, or that moral philosophy has no function. But the function of moral philosophy is not demonstrative: it consists rather in the comparison and criticism of the precepts which society is wont to take for granted, and the authority of philosophers is most significant when it re-affirms after the critical process the principles upon which the fabric of society is supported. That this was the position of St. Thomas is not doubtful, and one or two special reasons may be mentioned for his method of treating moral questions.

(1) Every student of Greek philosophy will allow that the influence of Aristotle would incline St. Thomas towards what is known as the 'dialectical' treatment of moral problems. There is no more remarkable feature of the *Nicomachean Ethics* than the Philosopher's faith in his own maxim, ἃ γὰρ πᾶσι δοκεῖ ταῦτα καὶ εἶναί φαμεν (*Nic. Eth.* x. 1172. b. 36). Everywhere we find the enumeration of received opinions, the detection of ἀπορίαι in them, and the resolution of the apparent contradictions by some effort of criticism. In almost all cases Aristotle contrives to give the impression that the doctrine finally commended to his audience was implicit in nearly all the opinions held by the many or the wise. A critic may sometimes reflect that the opinions are transformed beyond recognition by the dialectical process, but it remains the undoubted conviction of Aristotle that his own moral teaching will not be successfully established unless he can prove it to be consistent with the prevailing convictions of mankind. The immense possibilities of this method were perhaps not realized until modern philosophy resumed it, but the manner of exposition adopted in the *Summa* is an interesting development of Aristotle's principle.

(2) But, in point of fact, it is far safer to call the method of St. Thomas dialectical than to ascribe it to the peculiar influence of Aristotle. Dialectic of some sort or other was one of the few intellectual instruments which never fell entirely into disuse: and, apart from the fact that dialectic was part of the *Trivium*, there had been for about a century and a half before

the birth of St. Thomas a definite tendency towards the mode of philosophical exposition which is brought to perfection in the *Summa*. I shall not pretend to go into the history of the subject, but the name of Abelard may be mentioned and, still more, the name of Petrus Lombardus, whose *Liber Sententiarum* produced such a multitude of commentaries. The essence of the method lies in the balancing against each other of arguments on both sides of a question, and, in this respect, any half-dozen pages of the *Summa* are typical of all the rest. Everywhere is found a series of propositions, technically known as *obiectiones*; then a statement of the opposite opinion, introduced by the words *sed contra*; then the *corpus* of the article, in which St. Thomas gives his own view; and, finally, a solution of the several *obiectiones*. But if the variations in this outward scheme are too slight to require mention, its inner significance is by no means unchanging. The custom of setting down a number of propositions opposed to the doctrine afterwards preferred by the writer is sometimes reduced to a mere formality, so that St. Thomas appears to be giving a mere display of ingenuity, devising objections so trivial that no serious answer is needed. But at other times he seems to aim at the solution of genuine difficulties, to be scrupulous in fairness to his opponents, to state both sides of a question, and to enlighten the judgement of the reader by guiding him through perplexities. And again, there is as much variation in the manner of resolving *obiectiones* as in the original statement of them. At one extreme we find St. Thomas flatly contradicting his real or imaginary opponent; at the other he inclines to the uninspiring optimism which holds that every one means the same thing at bottom, and that philosophies differ only in verbal expression. Thus no generalization is likely to express quite adequately the whole meaning of St. Thomas's dialectic, but, undoubtedly, he shares the two great convictions out of which his method originally sprang; and these are, firstly, that an opponent cannot be refuted until you have done justice to his opinion; secondly, that, since truth is many-sided, there is likely to be something behind even the fiercest contradictions which all parties alike

believe. Perceiving that Authority, as binding upon conscience, does not extend beyond the exclusively Christian doctrines, St. Thomas is an advocate of free inquiry in philosophy, and so comes to employ dialectic as a convenient instrument: perceiving also that in many matters of human inquiry, and especially in moral philosophy, nothing more than probability can be expected, he finds a deep significance in anything approaching a consensus of opinion, and is always disposed to believe that men agree more nearly in substance than a casual quotation of their opinions would suggest. Thus if flat contradiction be one limit and general reconciliation the other, there is no question but that St. Thomas constantly approaches the latter; and I venture to say that, if one open the *Summa* at random and read fifty consecutive pages, there will not be more than one or two instances of the unqualified denial of an *obiectio*. Even where St. Thomas is set upon the absolute refutation of an opinion, he is apt to effect it not by simple contradiction, but by showing that error had arisen because Averroes, or whoever it may be, had misinterpreted his own authorities. The most solid foundation of the vast moral structure built up in the *Summa* is the belief that revealed religion, natural law, and all the greater schools of philosophy have agreed in teaching the same principles of morality: and if we fail to put ourselves in sympathy with this belief, I cannot think it likely that we shall ever understand either St. Thomas or Dante.

We must not suppose that moral philosophy, in its widest range, was free from diametrical antagonisms of opinion, such as must compel St. Thomas to range himself on one side or the other. Those same Arabian doctrines of the soul had ethical consequences, and no age is altogether free from moral anarchists for whom no quarter is possible. But take that large section of the *Summa* (roughly from 1. 2. xx to 2. 2. clxi) which treats of goodness and badness in human action, of virtue and vice in general, of the classification of specific virtues and vices and of their several characteristics; it will be found that in all this St. Thomas is conscious of scarcely any difference of opinion which may not be overcome

by a careful dialectic. True, there are the historic differences between certain schools of philosophy, for St. Thomas was acquainted with the main tenets of Stoics, Epicureans, Platonists, and Peripatetics, and he did not try to present them all as advocates of the same principles. But we must call to mind again the difference between controversies of older and more recent date. St. Thomas did not suppose that Stoics and Epicureans had wrangled about nothing, but since these and many other ethical disputes had been argued out in ancient writers, such as Cicero, he assumes, as one might say, that the dialectical process was already completed, that untenable doctrines had been finally refuted, and the element of truth in them turned to good purpose. Thus he has no scruple about rejecting the Stoic doctrine that all offences are equal, because the consequences of such a paradox had long ago been exposed. Or with Cicero, again, defects are as much recognized as merits, and St. Thomas can accuse him of falling into error (*Sent.* ii, D. xxxvii, q. iii. 1), or charge him with a bad criticism of the Peripatetics (*S.* 1. 2. xxiv. 2), without shaking his position as a moralist and without denying the great benefit to society of the influence exercised by the *De Officiis* and other moral treatises. Wherever, in fact, St. Thomas is working upon materials long familiar to Latin philosophy, he takes advantage of the labours of Augustine, Gregory, and other moralists, not omitting to justify his own opinions, but assuming that in some matters a verdict has been already recorded.

But though St. Thomas could easily dispose of the Stoics and Epicureans, and of a host of minor contradictions discoverable in accredited writers, there was one more imminent difficulty, and this was, once more, the philosophy of Aristotle. We have seen that Aristotle was still a modern discovery, and I must insist that the problem set to Albertus and St. Thomas was not the testing of other doctrines by the touchstone of Aristotle, but the establishment of Aristotle by proving his conformity to accepted standards. The more reasonable it was to expect a consensus in respect of moral teaching, the more urgent was it to show that Aristotle was not an

awkward exception. Had his analysis of the soul for ethical purposes, his conception of the will, or even his classification of the virtues been irreconcilable with the teaching of other moralists; had there, in a word, been an undoubted discrepancy between Aristotle and the main ethical traditions of Christian society, it would have been a desperate undertaking for any respectable doctor to lecture on the *Nicomachean Ethics* at Paris. St. Thomas, therefore, employs all the resources of his dialectic in working the moral doctrines of Aristotle into a system long recognized in the schools; and, in truth, it was no small feat to embody the *Nicomachean Ethics* in a commentary on the *Liber Sententiarum* without any admission that a revolution was in progress. The difficulty would, as a matter of fact, vary considerably. When Aristotle had struck deeper or further afield than any known writer, it would, perhaps, be easy to find a suitable place for the introduction of new doctrines: but where the ground was common to all moralists the danger of a conflict must increase. If, for instance, Aristotle recognized eleven moral virtues, while the common tradition reduced them to four, was this an occasion of controversy, or only a variety of expression? But I must not anticipate questions belonging to later chapters: I will only repeat, in conclusion, that the dialectical method of St. Thomas and his faith in a radical agreement among moral teachers are the key to a large part of his system. Our task now is to start with St. Thomas from the beginning, and watch him gradually drawing all the philosophers, Jew, Gentile, and Christian, into one capacious net.

CHAPTER VI

THE HUMAN SOUL

THE construction of St. Thomas's moral system depends upon his analysis of the human soul and its faculties. But St. Thomas, like the greatest of his teachers, was aware that the soul can be studied for many different purposes, and that an analysis suitable to one science may be too shallow or too deep for another. He assents to the Aristotelian principle that a too refined psychology is useless to the moral philosopher, though in practice it was infinitely harder for a mediaeval writer to avoid extraneous speculations than for any writer of the fourth century before Christ. For the soul had passed through many vicissitudes since the time of Aristotle; it had learned to expect damnation or beatitude, to compare itself with the lowest and the highest of created things, and to find in the words ἢ θηρίον ἢ θεός a truth far deeper than their author could have imagined. Nor was it only through a deeper and more tragic introspection that the conception of the soul had enlarged itself. There was also the growth of a cosmic philosophy, originating in Platonic and oriental speculations, but passing without much delay into Latin thought, a philosophy which perceived in the universe a stupendous hierarchy of beings, emanating from the Creator and descending in an unbroken series, so that every order touched a higher and a lower, reproducing the higher imperfectly and impressing upon the lower a still fainter image of the infinite Perfection. Thus a work like the *Liber de Causis* presents an account of the human soul which to a modern reader will seem as remote from the doctrine of Aristotle as from the latest textbook of physiological psychology: yet the *De Causis* passed freely as the production of Aristotle, and although St. Thomas did not fall into this error, he could comment upon the book in such a

way as to bring a fantasy of bastard Platonism into broad agreement with the naked science of the *De Anima*. Unquestionably, too, those adventurous conjectures as to man's place in the universe had a bearing upon moral philosophy. Consider, for example, the great problem of free will. We flatter ourselves that modern views of matter and motion are infinitely distant from the belief in celestial 'influences': the business of casting horoscopes is discredited, and even in the more conservative world of fiction those charming old gentlemen with white beards and velvet mantles begin to look a trifle old-fashioned. Yet the ethical problem is very little altered, and the reasons which prompted Kant to thrust the soul into an order of things above the mechanical are much the same as moved St. Thomas to argue that the *corpora caelestia* could make no direct impression on the will. And so, while ostensibly following Aristotle in deprecating minuteness in the actual analysis of the soul, St. Thomas was bound to look upon will and intellect in the manner of an age which had taken up the occasional, half-explained utterances of older Greek philosophy, and translated them into the imposing phrases of Dionysius the Areopagite or the *Liber de Causis*. We must, therefore, approach the study of moral psychology with the knowledge that some intrusion of mediaeval physics and metaphysics is inevitable.

Since functions and activities of the soul which, by their very nature, are beyond the control of reason do not interest the moral philosopher, St. Thomas begins by setting aside the processes of nutrition, growth, and reproduction. Everything that then remains has some part in ethical conduct, and the first distinction to be established is that between *rationale per essentiam* and *rationale per participationem*, for which terms we may substitute (with a reservation shortly to be explained) the more convenient *ratio* and *appetitus*. The usage of *ratio* in St. Thomas's writings is full of difficulties, and I must begin by taking precautions against a confusion of the Augustinian *ratio superior* and *ratio inferior* with an apparently similar distinction in Aristotle's *Ethics*. The part of the soul which St. Thomas would call *rationale per essentiam* is sub-divided

by Aristotle into τὸ ἐπιστημονικόν and τὸ λογιστικόν (or δοξαστικόν), and the corresponding Latin terms are *scientificum* and *ratiocinativum* (or *opiniativum*). On this basis the 'intellectual virtues' are enumerated and classified, and the 'theoretic' use of reason falls gradually apart from the 'practical'. Now the *ratio superior* and *ratio inferior* which St. Thomas derives from St. Augustine are by no means the same as Aristotle's *scientificum* and *ratiocinativum*: for Aristotle makes the distinction between the higher and the lower use of reason analogous to the distinction between things necessary and things contingent, whereas the *ratio inferior* of St. Augustine is so far from being confined to the study of the contingent that it embraces both metaphysics and natural science. Similarly, the *intellectus speculativus* and *intellectus practicus* are not St. Augustine's higher and lower modes of reason, for the activity of the *ratio superior* is practical as well as speculative. Out of many statements I will quote only the two following:—

patet quod ratio superior partim est speculativa et partim practica . . . unde ex hoc patet quod ratio superior, prout contra inferiorem dividitur, non distat ab ea sicut speculativum et practicum, quasi ad diversa obiecta respiciant, de quibus fiat ratiocinatio; sed magis distinguuntur secundum media unde ratiocinatio sumitur: ratio enim inferior consiliatur ad electionem tendens ex rationibus rerum temporalium, ut quod aliquid est superfluum vel diminutum, utile vel honestum, et sic de aliis quas moralis philosophus pertractat; superior vero consilium sumit ex rationibus aeternis et divinis, ut quia est contra praeceptum Dei, vel aliquid huiusmodi. (*Sent.* ii, D. xxiv, q. ii. 2.)

Again:—

scientificum et ratiocinativum et opiniativum non sunt idem quod potentia superior et inferior, quia et circa naturas inferiores quas respicit ratio inferior possunt accipi necessariae conditiones, quae ad scientificum pertinent; alias Physica et Metaphysica non essent scientiae: similiter et superior ad actus humanos ex libero arbitrio dependentes, et per hoc contingentes, quodammodo convertitur; alias superiori rationi non attribueretur peccatum, quod circa hoc contingit. (*De Ver.* xv. 2. ad 3.)

The truth is that in his employment of the terms *ratio superior* and *ratio inferior* St. Thomas alludes to a view of human life to which there is no true parallel in Aristotle, for the simple reason that Aristotle was a philosopher, but not a theologian in the Christian sense. Yet the main point of troubling ourselves about the difference between St. Augustine and Aristotle is that we may understand how, despite the difference, St. Thomas contrives to adjust the Christian view of *ratio* to a Pagan psychology, and how, too, he is ready to show that Aristotle had made a real approximation to truth of a higher order than unaided reason can grasp. In the first place, St. Thomas does not postulate the existence of *potentiae* beyond those recognized by Aristotle (cf. *S.* 1. lxxix. 9 and 11); and, again, he gives many indications that the terminology and statements of Aristotle can easily be adapted to later doctrines. The term *sapientia*, for instance, which serves as a rendering of Aristotle's σοφία, is also the name of one of the seven *dona Spiritus*, and though St. Thomas never identifies Aristotle's *sapientia* with the *donum*, he certainly does not refuse to make use of Aristotle's statements. Thus, when actually describing the wisdom which is given by the Spirit, he writes :—

> Secundum Philosophum, 'ad sapientem pertinet considerare causam altissimam, per quam certissime de aliis iudicatur et secundum quam omnia ordinare oportet' . . . ille autem qui cognoscit causam altissimam simpliciter, quae est Deus, dicitur sapiens simpliciter, inquantum per regulas divinas omnia potest iudicare et ordinare. Huiusmodi autem iudicium consequitur homo per Spiritum Sanctum. (*S.* 2. 2. xlv. 1.)

So far, the Philosopher appears to provide all that is necessary, but St. Thomas corrects this impression by adding immediately :—

> Sapientia quae ponitur donum Spiritus Sancti differt ab ea quae ponitur virtus intellectualis acquisita ; nam illa acquiritur studio humano, haec autem est de sursum descendens. (Ibid. ad 2.)

Aristotle had declared that the highest wisdom lay in the study of the *causa altissima*, the contemplation of things

divine, and thus he came as near as was possible to anticipating the exercise of the *ratio superior* and the existence of *dona Spiritus*. In this example we can see that there must be a view of human life which raises human thought and conduct above the plane of intellectual and moral virtues, but we also suspect that the Christian view will never be altogether out of touch with pre-Christian philosophy. More probably, the higher stratum will be superimposed on the lower, the ancient psychology being adequate in principle, and the ancient deductions from the principle being valid within their own sphere.

For the present, it will not be necessary to bear in mind the conception of *ratio superior*, but in attempting to analyse the soul in a non-theological way I still cannot think it expedient to deal with *ratio* as St. Thomas might have done had the whole of his teaching been taken from Aristotle. For Aristotle holds that reason as speculative is not interested in the social and moral life of man: no *moral* virtue is exhibited in the perfected activity of τὸ ἐπιστημονικόν. Now, literally and technically speaking, the same thing is true of St. Thomas, for he does not make the *intellectus speculativus* the seat of any *virtus moralis*. Nevertheless, if our ultimate object is to understand St. Thomas's classification of sins, we cannot afford to exclude the speculative intellect on the ground that moral philosophy is not concerned with it. For St. Thomas will show in course of time that mortal sin is possible in connexion with the speculative activity of reason, and the Aristotelian psychology will therefore be adequate only if we take it in its entirety, and allow Aristotle's own doctrine to be modified in the way required by mediaeval thought. *Ratio*, then, we must take to include both speculative and practical intellect, and with this one point established we must turn to the examination of *appetitus*.

As a fact in the economy of the universe, *appetitus* is, if possible, of even deeper import than *ratio*. The former expresses the eternal relation of *ens* to *bonum*, the latter the not less eternal relation of *ens* to *verum*. Now Existence, Truth, and Goodness are said to be inseparable and co-extensive, identical, as St. Thomas says, *secundum rem* and

differing only *secundum rationem*. All existence reveals itself as *bonum* in so far as it represents a natural but, as yet, unrealized condition; and all effort towards a more complete existence is called *appetitus* or *appetitus boni*. Similarly, all existence can be the object of intelligence, and

sicut bonum habet rationem appetibilis ita verum habet ordinem ad cognitionem. Unumquodque autem inquantum habet de esse intantum est cognoscibile: et propter hoc dicitur quod 'anima est quodammodo omnia', secundum sensum et intellectum. Et ideo, sicut bonum convertitur cum ente, ita et verum. (*S.* 1. xvi. 3.)

Nevertheless, there is a sense in which *appetitus* is wider than *intellectus*; for, according to St. Thomas, truth exists primarily in the intellect, goodness primarily in things themselves; and the result of this doctrine is that the notion of truth cannot be extended beyond the realm of conscious beings, while *appetitus* need imply no more than the unconscious process from potential to actual which is exemplified even in the motion of the elements. Existence is as much *verum* as *bonum*, the object of knowledge as much as the object of desire, but when reason and appetite are regarded as immanent and active in the universe, we have to say with St. Thomas, *omnia appetunt bonum sed non omnia cognoscunt verum* (*De Ver.* xxi. 3). Evidently, then, the *appetitus boni* will appear in more forms than one:—

Secundum hoc invenimus duos appetitus, scilicet appetitum naturalem, qui nihil aliud est quam inclinatio rei in finem suum naturalem qui est ex directione instituentis naturam, et iterum appetitum voluntarium, qui est inclinatio cognoscentis finem et ordinem in finem illum; et inter hos duos appetitus est unus medius, qui procedit ex cognitione sine hoc quod cognoscatur ratio finis et proportio eius quod est ad finem in finem ipsum: et iste est appetitus sensitivus. (*Sent.* iii, D. xxvii, q. i. 2.)

It will be observed that St. Thomas speaks here of three varieties of appetite. Of these the *appetitus naturalis* has really nothing to do with the moral conduct of human beings. It exists and is active in the human body, but when the border-line between unconsciousness and consciousness is crossed, the lower is superseded by the higher forms of

activity, and the sensitive and rational appetites, between them, have to account for human actions. To understand the distinction between the sensitive and the rational appetite we have to return for a moment to the cognitive side of the soul; for in creatures who have any kind of *apprehension* of the end pursued the mode of appetite will be determined by the mode of apprehension, and when St. Thomas says (*supra*) that the *appetitus sensitivus* depends upon a mode of cognition in which the *ratio finis* is not comprehended, he means that sense-perception, when abstracted from intellect, is only a perception of the particular, not of a general principle manifested in the object. The lower form of human appetite is, therefore, a pursuit of immediate and particular ends, which reveal themselves, indeed, as *bona* but not *sub ratione boni*. With the rational appetite or will, on the other hand, the exact reverse is true: for the will never pursues anything but *bonum universale*, and though it often appears to be interested in particular objects, this is only because the *ratio* of some universal good is perceived in them :—

appetitus intellectivus, etsi feratur in res quae sunt extra animam singulares, fertur tamen in eas secundum aliquam rationem universalem, sicut cum appetit aliquid quia est bonum. (*S.* 1. lxxx. 2. ad 2.)

With the introduction of the rational appetite, commonly called *voluntas*, comes a fresh difficulty. For though it seemed easy to say that reason, as cognitive, is rational *per essentiam*, while appetite is rational only *per participationem*, it is not by any means easy to fit *voluntas* into either division. St. Thomas expresses himself with unusual laxity on the point, and one may produce two sets of instances which appear to be quite inconsistent. He writes, for instance :—

Si oportet dicere illam partem animae quae participat rationem esse aliqualiter rationalem, duplex erit rationale . . . . quaedam vero [sc. pars] est rationalis tantum, sicut intellectus et ratio; quaedam vero est secundum se quidem irrationalis, participative autem rationalis, ut appetitus sensitivus et voluntas. (*Eth.* i. 20.)

Here the will is clearly rational by 'participation,' and the

same assertion is made in *S.* 1. 2. lvi. 6. ad 2. Yet we find in another place :—

pars rationalis per essentiam non dicitur solum ipsa ratio sed etiam appetitus rationi annexus, scilicet voluntas ; unde Philosophus dicit in 3 De Anima quod voluntas in ratione est. (*Sent.* iii, D. xxvii, q. ii. 3. ad 1.)

And again :—

Cum voluntas non habeat organum corporale, sicut nec intellectus, voluntas et intellectus ad eamdem partem animae reducentur. Et sic quandoque intellectus vel ratio sumitur prout includit in se utrumque, et sic dicitur quod voluntas est in ratione : et secundum hoc rationale includens intellectum et voluntatem dividitur contra irascibile et concupiscibile. (*De Ver.* xxii. 10. ad 2.)

The uncertainty about the position of *voluntas* is, however, intelligible. If the pure and essential act of reason is cognitive, no form of appetite can be rational *per essentiam*. On the other hand, St. Thomas and many others before him had found reasons for allowing to *voluntas* a part in the highest form of human life and even in the life of God. The required point of alliance between will and intellect is found in St. Thomas's references to *organum corporale* and to Aristotle's statement (*De An.* iii. 432. b. 5), *voluntas in ratione est.* Aristotle had hinted that the theoretic function of intellect might be independent of bodily organs, and so immortal, and when the conception of *voluntas* had been developed to the degree implied in St. Thomas's writings, Christian philosophers were bound to claim for it also the same independence. Perhaps, too, the doctrine of free will had even more influence than the doctrine of immortality. For if its action were physically conditioned, the will would belong to the mechanical order of nature, and its motions would be traceable to the same celestial impulses that determine the physical and chemical changes in all terrestrial bodies. The will would then not be self-moving ; its decisions would be imposed upon it from without, and responsibility would vanish. St. Thomas, therefore, takes Aristotle's *voluntas in ratione est* as a declaration that the will, like the intellect, has no bodily

organ, and when he frames the question, so characteristic of mediaeval physics, *utrum corpora caelestia sint causa humanorum actuum*, the answer is:—

Si intellectus et voluntas essent vires corporeis organis alligatae . . . . . ex necessitate sequeretur quod corpora caelestia essent causa electionum et actuum humanorum. (*S.* 1. 2. cxv. 4.)

In a similar context he says:—

Voluntas, ut dicitur, est in ratione. Ratio autem est potentia animae non alligata organo corporali. Unde relinquitur quod voluntas sit potentia omnino immaterialis et incorporea . . . . unde impossibile est quod corpus caeleste imprimat directe in intellectum aut voluntatem. (*S.* 1. 2. ix. 5.)

All things considered, it does not matter much whether the will belongs technically to the *rationale per essentiam* or to the *rationale per participationem*, so long as we understand that, by its freedom from bodily organs, it is sharply distinguished from the *appetitus sensitivus*. The simplest plan will be to drop the more elaborate terms and take *ratio* and *appetitus* as a sufficiently fundamental division. Our analysis of the soul thus reaches this point:—

$$\text{ratio} = \begin{cases} \text{intellectus speculativus} \\ \text{intellectus practicus} \end{cases}$$

$$\text{appetitus} = \begin{cases} \text{appetitus rationalis (i.e. voluntas)} \\ \text{appetitus sensitivus.} \end{cases}$$

Our next business is to consider more particularly the interrelations of these faculties. The will now becomes the centre of the system, and we require to know how it influences or is influenced by the intellect and the lower appetite. And, first, as to will and intellect, the relation is so intimate that St. Thomas can say:—

Voluntas et intellectus mutuo se includunt. Nam intellectus intelligit voluntatem, et voluntas vult intellectum intelligere. Sic ergo, inter illa quae ordinantur ad obiectum voluntatis continentur etiam ea quae sunt intellectus, et e converso. Unde in ordine appetibilium bonum se habet ut universale et verum ut particulare; in ordine autem intelligibilium est e converso. (*S.* 1. xvi. 4. ad 1.)

The will determines the intelligence to action because truth itself is a *bonum*, an end to be pursued: in the same way, intellect includes the will and its objects in its theoretic survey because the *ratio boni* is itself an object of knowledge (cf. *S.* 1. lxxxii. 3. ad 1). The speculative and purposive activities being thus woven together, we have to ask how they stand to each other in the light of the causal concept. Does the will set the intellect in motion, or does the intellect move the will? St. Thomas distinguishes in this way:—

dicendum quod aliquid dicitur movere dupliciter, uno modo per modum finis, sicut dicitur quod finis movet efficientem; et hoc modo intellectus movet voluntatem, quia bonum intellectum est obiectum voluntatis. Alio modo dicitur aliquid movere per modum agentis, sicut alterans movet alteratum et impellens movet impulsum; et hoc modo voluntas movet intellectum et omnes animae vires. (*S.* 1. lxxxii. 4.)

All, however, who read this and similar passages will be offended by the same difficulty. For the alternation and inter-dependence of two acts looks plausible enough until an absolute beginning is demanded. You pass from will to intellect, from intellect to will, and so on: but infinity is not a legitimate refuge, and no distinction of final and efficient causation can hide from us that the absolute origin of motion in the human soul is inconceivable. St. Thomas was perfectly conscious of the dilemma, but I do not propose to follow the stages of his argument, since it is enough if we grasp as soon as possible the fact that the soul does *not* contain in itself an absolute origin of motion. In a sense, the will is styled 'self-moving,' but the self-motion is only within limits:—

[voluntas] ipsa movet seipsam inquantum per hoc quod vult finem reducit seipsam ad volendum ea quae sunt ad finem. Hoc autem non potest facere nisi consilio mediante . . . . et si quidem ipsa moveret seipsam ad volendum, oportuisset quod mediante consilio hoc ageret ex aliqua voluntate praesupposita. Non autem est procedere in infinitum: unde necesse est ponere quod in primum motum voluntatis voluntas prodeat ex instinctu alicuius exterioris moventis. (*S.* 1. 2. ix. 4.)

The self-motion begins when an end is once posited, but the original positing of an end is inexplicable unless we go

beyond the circle of the human soul in search of an end for which the will has an instinctiveaffinity. This end St. Thomas afterwards shows to be God. We must, therefore, not be deceived by such phrases as 'the self-motion of the will', for the whole autonomy of the will consists in its determination to choose the means (or proximate ends) proposed to it by reason: its direction towards the ultimate end of action is as much a matter of necessity as the motion of the elements towards their proper sphere, or the response of the eye to light:—

Sicut autem coloratum in actu est obiectum visus, ita bonum est obiectum voluntatis. Unde, si proponatur aliquod obiectum voluntati quod sit universaliter bonum et secundum omnem considerationem, ex necessitate in illud tendit, si aliquid velit; non enim poterit velle oppositum. (*S.* 1. 2. x. 2.)

This doctrine of the essential attraction of the will towards what is absolutely good has important consequences for moral philosophy, but for the present I wish only to explain that the inter-relation of will and intellect is not intelligible until we perceive that the *primum movens* is neither intellect nor will.

However intimate their connexion, *intellectus* and *voluntas* are always distinguishable, but *ratio* is more ambiguous because it sometimes includes both those faculties and sometimes bears a sense in which it appears to be almost contrasted with *voluntas*. I refer now not to passages already quoted, but to others, such as may be found in the *quaestio* (*S.* 1. 2. xvii) bearing the title *de actibus imperatis a voluntate*. Despite this title St. Thomas proceeds to argue that the term *imperare* is more appropriate to *ratio* than to *voluntas*, and even maintains that the *actus voluntatis* is within the *imperium rationis*:—

sicut potest iudicare [ratio] quod bonum sit aliquid velle, ita potest ordinare imperando quod homo velit. (*S.* 1. 2. xvii. 5.)

When the supreme place in the control of the faculties is thus assigned to *ratio*, St. Thomas is thinking of the 'practical' function of reason, and his doctrine is partly derived from Aristotle's assertion that φρόνησις is ἐπιτακτική. Yet we need not be confused by this imperative aspect of *ratio*, nor suppose that there is to be a new complication in the analysis of the

soul, for if we follow the most general usage of St. Thomas we shall see that the difficulty of understanding the relation of *voluntas* to *ratio* affects only the internal economy of the higher part of the soul; whereas, in regard to the sovereignty exercised by the higher part of the soul over the lower, it is almost a matter of indifference to St. Thomas whether he uses *ratio* or *voluntas* to denote the higher. When, for instance, he is discussing the nature of carnal sins, he shows that the lower appetite can prompt us to acts of carnal lust, but adds that the *mortal* element in the sin cannot reside in the sensual appetite, for

> inordinatio corrumpens principium spiritualis vitae, quod est finis ultimus, causat mortem spiritualem peccati mortalis. Ordinare autem aliquid in finem non est sensualitatis sed solum rationis . . . . unde peccatum mortale non potest esse in sensualitate sed solum in ratione. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiv. 4.)

On the other hand, it is far more common to hear from St. Thomas that *voluntas* alone can be the cause of mortal sin, and that no act deserves damnation unless it be either *elicitus* or, at least, *imperatus a voluntate*. The will alone makes acts moral, and those 'elicited' by other faculties

> pertinent ad genus moris per accidens secundum scilicet sunt a voluntate imperati. (*Sent.* ii, D. xl, q. i. 1.)

And again:—

> ratio culpae primo in actu voluntatis invenitur; in actibus autem intellectus et aliarum potentiarum non nisi secundum quod sunt imperati a voluntate. (*Sent.* ii, D. xxxix, q. i. 2.)

Evidently, then, the *imperium* of the higher over the lower faculties may as well be attached to *voluntas* as to *ratio*, and St. Thomas expresses the facts most conveniently when he asserts that all sin is, in a sense, *in voluntate*, and, answering the objection that Aristotle had placed it *in ratione*, replies:—

> ratio accipitur ibi a Philosopho pro parte intellectiva quae voluntatem et rationem complectitur . . . est autem peccatum in ratione sicut in dirigente et in voluntate sicut in eligente: et ideo, cum peccatum in electione compleatur, potius voluntas quam ratio subiectum eius primum dici debet. (*Sent.* ii, D. xli, q. ii. 2.)

Ratio is certainly a term to be handled with caution, but in future I shall try to introduce it only when necessary or when there is no chance of confusion, and, to this end, I shall use *intellectus* for the purely cognitive function, and regard *voluntas* not only as the higher form of the *appetitus boni* but as the faculty which claims to control all other powers of the soul. That cognitive reason does in its own way set the will in motion we know already, but *voluntas* may always be looked upon as the mainspring of moral action.

How far, then, does the will control the *appetitus sensitivus*? This lower appetite—the serpent in the garden of Eden—is always something of an alien in the true life of man, and, though we may not conceive it as a principle of evil condemned to war always against the good, the struggle between it and the higher appetite is a common fact of experience, and St. Thomas is fond of quoting from Aristotle's *Politics* the statement that the passions are ruled not despotically but *principatu politico aut regali, qui est ad liberos, qui non totaliter subduntur imperio.* (*S.* 1. 2. xvii. 7.) The disturbing element is found in the dependence of sense-perception upon bodily organs, for

> omnis actus virtutis utentis organo corporali dependet non solum ex potentia animae, sed etiam ex corporalis organi dispositione. (S. 1. 2. xvii. 7.)

and

> qualitas et dispositio corporis non subiacet imperio rationis, et ideo ex hac parte impeditur quin motus sensitivi appetitus totaliter subdatur imperio rationis. (Ibid.)

The impulses arising from a man's bodily disposition cannot be prevented, and through them the imagination is distorted and the moral choice liable to be affected. Again, sensual apprehension requires the stimulus of an external and physical object, but the presence of such objects cannot be controlled by the will. They may be thrust upon us without warning, and an impulse to a wrong act may thus arise before the controlling agency can be brought into play. Nevertheless, St. Thomas would deny that any bodily complexion or

stimulus to sense can be a bond of necessity upon the will. Passion influences the will because

secundum quod homo est in passione aliqua videtur ipsi aliquid conveniens quod non videtur ei extra passionem existenti. (*S.* 1. 2. ix. 2.)

But passion alone (unless in the case of *furiosi vel amentes*) cannot directly produce action: the decision always rests with the will:—

Etsi voluntas non possit facere quin motus concupiscentiae insurgat . . . tamen potest voluntas non velle concupiscere, aut concupiscentiae non consentire; et sic non ex necessitate sequitur concupiscentiae motum. (*S.* 1. 2. x. 3. ad 1.)

The position of *voluntas* in human action has thus been gradually defined. Though dependent in one way upon intellect and in another upon sense-perception, neither of these faculties can absolutely determine the act of *electio*. Only in its appetite for the absolutely good is the will subject to what St. Thomas calls *naturalis necessitas*, nor does he admit that this kind of necessity is out of harmony with the will's proper activity:—

nec necessitas naturalis repugnat voluntati: quin immo necesse est quod, sicut intellectus ex necessitate inhaeret primis principiis, ita voluntas ex necessitate inhaereat ultimo fini, qui est beatitudo. (*S.* 1. lxxxii. 1.)

Moreover, the truth is that in human experience the absolute beatitude is never presented as an object:—

alia autem quaelibet particularia bona, inquantum deficiunt ab aliquo bono, possunt accipi ut non bona, et secundum hanc considerationem possunt repudiari vel approbari a voluntate. (S. 1. 2. x. 2.)

To all intents and purposes, therefore, the will is free to choose its course of action. God, says St. Thomas, moves all things *secundum conditionem eorum*, and the natural condition of will is to be an *activum principium non determinatum ad unum*. (*S.* 1. 2. x. 4.) That St. Thomas should assert the will's freedom can surprise nobody, but in his analysis of the soul we must be careful not to overlook the distinction

between the acts of the will within its own circle and the acts in which it finds expression through other *potentiae*. Incidentally I have introduced the terms *elicere* and *imperare*, which denote, respectively, the immediate and delegated act of will, and with a view to the eventual classification of virtues and vices we can hardly pay too much attention to the doctrine summarized in the words:—

actio autem dupliciter dicitur voluntaria, uno modo quia imperatur a voluntate, sicut ambulare vel loqui; alio modo quia elicitur a voluntate, sicut ipsum velle. (*S.* 1. 2. i. 1. ad 2.)

Only when 'eliciting' its own action does the will commit an act that is perfectly moral: intellectual and sensual activity have no intrinsic moral character, and the same applies even more forcibly to external actions. The practical consequences of this doctrine will be revealed in ensuing chapters.

Our analysis of the soul will not be complete until we have ascertained the number and arrangement of the passions included under the general heading of *appetitus sensitivus*. Within this appetite St. Thomas finds two distinct *potentiae*, to be known as *irascibilis* and *concupiscibilis*, and each of these contains several passions. Passing over the cosmic origin of the distinction between the irascible and the concupiscent, we may start from the following statement:—

ita in appetitu sensitivo ista duo inveniuntur: nam animal per appetitivam potentiam appetit id quod est congruum et amicum sibi, et hoc per vim concupiscibilem, cuius proprium obiectum est delectabile secundum sensum; appetit etiam habere dominium et victoriam super ea quae sunt sibi contraria, et hoc per vim irascibilem unde dicitur quod eius obiectum est aliquid arduum. (*De Ver.* xxv. 2.)

The concluding word *arduum* is always employed by St. Thomas to mark the exact point of difference between the two species of lower appetite. The simple appetite for all that is *bonum secundum sensum* implies only a distaste for the corresponding *malum*, but the combative instinct which prompts men and other animals to overcome obstacles to the attainment of good is so distinct from sheer concupiscence that

St. Thomas sees in it the basis of a distinct *potentia*. For, as he says:—

interdum anima tristibus se ingerit contra inclinationem concupiscibilis, ut secundum inclinationem irascibilis impugnet contraria; unde etiam passiones irascibilis repugnare videntur passionibus concupiscibilis. (*S.* 1. 2. xxiii. 1.)

Despite this divergence or opposition, however, there remains a fundamental unity of aim in the two species of appetite. The *irascibilis* first appears as *propugnatrix et defensatrix concupiscibilis* (ibid.), and the field of its warfare seems at first to be defined by the words *de cibis et venereis* (ibid.). Whether St. Thomas will always treat the irascible as a mere instrument of the concupiscent is another question, but such, at least, is its origin.

It will be useful to mention here that St. Thomas considers in several places whether this same distinction between *irascibilis* and *concupiscibilis* does not exist in the *appetitus rationalis* also. Technically he holds that it is not so, but the qualifications by which his answer is accompanied are interesting as illustrating the devices to which the rigorous division between will and sensual appetite obliged philosophers to have recourse. St. Thomas could not possibly admit that immaterial spirits suffered any kind of passion. Nevertheless, the sort of distinction in type which terms like *amor* and *ira* would commonly imply was necessary even in the case of God. We are told, therefore, that

appetitus superior circa eadem habet operationem cum appetitibus inferioribus, quamvis altiori modo, nam inferiores appetitus tendunt in sua obiecta materialiter et cum aliqua passione . . . . appetitus vero superior habet aliquos actus similes inferiori, sed absque omni passione. (*De Ver.* xxv. 3.)

In the *Summa*, too, we read that *amor* and *concupiscentia* are sometimes the names of passions, but

Alio modo significant simplicem affectum absque passione vel animi concitatione, et hoc etiam modo attribuuntur angelis et Deo. (*S.* 1. lxxxii. 5.)

Thus St. Thomas not only makes it possible to justify such expressions as 'God is angry', but prepares the way for

admitting movements of the human will which can display the 'irascible' character without being actually passionate.

Returning to the lower appetite, we must next inquire which of its two *potentiae* is naturally superior. St. Thomas adopts the style of Dionysius the Areopagite, and teaches the perfect continuity of all created beings. The lower always touches the horizon, shutting it off from its immediate superior, and the grades of angels, men, and beasts being thus linked together at each point of transition, every distinguishable mode of intelligence and appetite will contain an element pointing to a nature higher than its own. As regards sensual appetite, St. Thomas affirms that the *irascibilis* comes nearest to the rational:—

Nam quod animal appetat id quod est delectabile secundum sensum, quod ad concupiscibilem pertinet, hoc est secundum propriam rationem sensibilis animae; sed quod relicto delectabili appetit victoriam, quam consequitur cum dolore, quod ad irascibilem pertinet, competit ei secundum quod attingit aliqualiter appetitum superiorem, unde irascibilis est propinquior rationi et voluntati quam concupiscibilis. (*De Ver.* xxv. 2.)

Afterwards he compares the two *potentiae* in respect of their infection by original sin, and, declaring first that reason itself is wholly untainted, he adds:—

Et ideo cum irascibilis sit magis rationi propinqua, quasi aliquid rationis in suo motu participans, minus erit corrupta irascibilis quam concupiscibilis. (*De Ver.* xxv. 6.)

When the two parts of the lower appetite are thus established in their relative positions we have next to undertake a nicer analysis of each. The principle of classifying *secundum obiecta*, which supplies the generic distinction between the concupiscent and the irascible (*bonum absolute* being one *obiectum* and *bonum sub ratione ardui* another), is also invoked for the detection of specific differences among the passions of either group. The discovery of the *obiecta* which are to differentiate the passions is not effected without much subtlety of reasoning, but the broadest principle is that of *contrarietas*, which gives an antithetic arrangement of the passions into pairs. Even here, however, we find a complication, for

in passionibus animae duplex contrarietas invenitur, una

quidem secundum contrarietatem obiectorum, scilicet boni et mali, alia vero secundum accessum et recessum ab eodem termino. (*S.* 1. 2. xxiii. 2.)

As concrete examples, we may take *amor* and *odium* as an illustration of the former kind of *contrarietas*, *timor* and *audacia* of the latter. If any object excite *amor*, its opposite must excite *odium*: on the other hand, when toil or danger presents itself on the road towards the good desired, there is an interplay of the passions *timor* and *audacia*, and here there is no *contrarietas obiectorum*, for it is one and the same *terminus* which both attracts and repels. St. Thomas then points out that in the passions of the *concupiscibilis* only the former kind of *contrarietas* is found, while (thanks to the *ratio ardui*) the passions of the *irascibilis* exhibit both. In this way he arrives at three pairs of passions in the concupiscent group and two pairs in the irascible. The only passion not thus included is *ira* itself, which, for reasons that I shall not trouble to repeat, is said to be a *passio non habens contrarium* (*S.* 1. 2. xxiii. 3). The complete table of the passions is this:—

concupiscibilis	*irascibilis*
amor et odium	spes et desperatio
desiderium et fuga	timor et audacia
gaudium et tristitia	ira

Thus far, however, we have no explanation of the difference between passions not opposed to each other, as, for instance, *desiderium* and *amor*. But here St. Thomas observes (along with certain physical analogies) that *amor*, *desiderium*, and *gaudium* are distinguished because they denote three stages in the attraction towards an object and its actual fruition. The same stages, relatively to *malum*, are signified by *odium*, *fuga*, and *tristitia*. As to the other group of passions, *spes* and *desperatio* point to a *bonum nondum adeptum*, *timor* and *audacia* to *malum nondum iniacens* (*S.* 1. 2. xxiii. 4). *Ira* falls apart from the others because it is aroused by the actual pressure of some evil.

We have not yet finished with the passions. They have been divided into two main groups, and each group has its internal order, but St. Thomas would also determine their

ordo generationis in the soul. The absolute priority does not belong to either group, for though the *concupiscibilis* has the better claim, St. Thomas reflects that the terminus as well as the origin of all passion lies within this province. Sensual appetite in all its forms is an appetite for some good, and the irascible passions (so far as at present we understand them) are only incidental to perfect attainment or perfect failure to attain the good. In them there is no state of acquiescence :—

in passionibus irascibilis non invenitur aliquid pertinens ad quietem sed solum pertinens ad motum. (*S.* 1. 2. xxv. 1.)

Some of the concupiscent passions also imply motion towards a further goal, but *gaudium* and *tristitia* are final states :—

et sic manifestum est quod omnis passio irascibilis terminatur ad passionem concupiscibilis pertinentem ad quietem, scilicet vel ad gaudium vel ad tristitiam. (Ibid.)

On the other hand, there is no doubt that passions such as *amor* and *desiderium* are more primitive than any of the other group. St. Thomas concludes, therefore, that

passiones irascibilis mediae sunt inter passiones concupiscibilis quae important motum in bonum vel in malum et inter passiones concupiscibilis quae important quietem in bono vel in malo. (Ibid.)

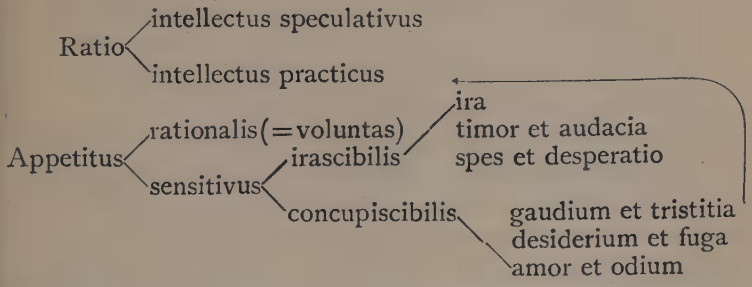
We may pass over a number of minor arguments and be content to note the eventual order of the passions, which is this :—

amor et odium
desiderium et fuga
spes et desperatio
timor et audacia
ira
gaudium et tristitia.

Gaudium and *tristitia* are placed last in the order of generation because except in them there is no finality, but we are not to understand that joy and sadness cannot be reached but by passing first through the whole range of passions. Rather, St. Thomas means that every passion is at length resolved into one or other of the final states, so that, strictly speaking, it

would be impossible to represent the whole function of *gaudium* and *tristitia* except by inserting them between each step in the scale of passions.

We must now re-consider our previous diagram of the soul, so as to make room for the many elements into which the *appetitus sensitivus* has been analysed. We are hampered, however, by the fact that St. Thomas has arranged the passions in more than one kind of *ordo*. From one point of view, the whole of the *irascibilis* is prior (i.e. superior) to the whole of the *concupiscibilis*; but as regards the *ordo generationis* we have found that the one is interwoven with the other. Now, for almost every purpose, the order of natural superiority will be of far greater importance to us than the order of generation. Our diagram, therefore, must be constructed, as hitherto, on the principle of placing the most purely rational faculties at the top and those most removed from reason at the bottom. Moreover, if we write the most primitive passions at the bottom of the list and proceed upwards to the least primitive, we shall then, by simply reading the list downwards, perceive the order of superiority; for St. Thomas teaches that the higher a passion is in its nature the later does it appear in the order of generation. *Gaudium* and *tristitia* alone will cause a difficulty, but this can be overcome by a simple device. The diagram will be this:—



The line curving upwards from *gaudium et tristitia* is to indicate that those passions, though belonging to the *concupiscibilis*, are the final states relatively to all passions whatever.

Before concluding this chapter I should like to point out how excellently St. Thomas illustrates, by his analysis of the

soul his method of incorporating Aristotle into a system which, for the most part, was not of Aristotelian origin. Of the intellect no more need be said at present, but I will refer briefly to the following points:—

(1) The conception of will.
(2) The division of the lower appetite into *irascibilis* and *concupiscibilis*.
(3) The superiority of the *irascibilis*.
(4) The classification of the passions.
(5) The exceptional position of *gaudium* and *tristitia*.

(1) It would be an extreme opinion to say that in Aristotle's philosophy there is no such thing as the Will: but it would be a far greater extravagance to pretend that Aristotle was conscious of teaching a half or a quarter of the doctrines connected by St. Thomas with *voluntas*. Those doctrines had been slowly fashioned by the work of long centuries, and the only question was whether the recovered writings of Aristotle would agree or conflict with opinions far too firmly established for any philosopher in the thirteenth century to overthrow. The terms βούλησις and βούλομαι play a very modest part in the ethical teaching of Aristotle, and one would have expected it to take more than the fact of translation into Latin to transform them into St. Thomas's *voluntas* and *volo*. Yet the mere translation was half the battle. Even in our own age, when we pride ourselves on the gift of historical imagination, we find it hard enough to use any philosophical term without referring it, often unconsciously, to the schools of philosophy that have done most to colour its meaning: and in St. Thomas's day, when there was a common inclination to attribute present beliefs to ancient authorities, the *voluntas* of Aristotle inevitably attached to itself all the associations which had gathered round the word. Thus, as we have seen, the proposition *voluntas in ratione est*, whatever it meant for Aristotle, meant for St. Thomas that the will, though appetitive by nature, did not depend upon sense-perception for the apprehension of an object, nor upon bodily organs for its life and liberty of motion. If we look, too, at the *Nicomachean Ethics* we shall see how easily the will assumed the position demanded by

St. Thomas. Little as Aristotle had said about βούλησις, he had certainly placed προαίρεσις in the very centre of his moral philosophy, and the achievement of the Latin interpretation was to turn *electio* into an adjunct of *voluntas*. In technical language, *voluntas* became a *potentia* of the soul, *electio* an *actus voluntatis*; or the difference may be expressed as by St. Thomas in the Commentary on the *Ethics*:—

Utrumque enim pertinet ad unam potentiam, scilicet ad appetitum rationalem, qui voluntas dicitur. Sed voluntas nominat huiusmodi potentiae actum relatum in bonum absolute; electio autem nominat actum eiusdem potentiae relatum in bonum secundum quod pertinet ad nostram operationem, per quam in aliquod bonum ordinamur. (*Eth.* iii. 5.)

That *voluntas* should refer to the absolute end, *electio* to the means, agrees, so far, with what Aristotle had said; but in answering the question, *utrum voluntas sit tantum finis, an etiam eorum quae sunt ad finem*, St. Thomas decides that the will is directed towards both end and means, and when it is urged that Aristotle had taught otherwise he replies:—

Philosophus loquitur de voluntate secundum quod proprie nominat simplicem actum voluntatis, non autem secundum quod nominat potentiam. (*S.* 1. 2. viii. 2. ad 1.)

And in the next article:—

Sic ergo voluntas in finem dupliciter fertur: uno modo absolute et secundum se; alio modo sicut in rationem volendi ea quae sunt ad finem. (*S.* 1. 2. viii. 3.)

All points of distinction between *voluntas* and *electio* thus fall within the unity of a single *appetitus rationalis*, nor is St. Thomas much troubled by Aristotle's statement that βούλησις can relate to impossible things whereas προαίρεσις can not. In the Commentary we read:—

Electio, quia refertur ad nostram operationem, non dicitur esse impossibilium . . . sed voluntas, quia respicit bonum absolute, potest esse cuiuscumque boni, licet sit impossibile. (*Eth.* iii. 5.)

In the *Summa* there is a slightly different solution:—

Voluntas completa non est nisi de possibili quod est bonum volenti; sed voluntas incompleta est de impossibili, quae

secundum quosdam velleitas dicitur, quia scilicet aliquis vellet illud si esset possibile. (*S.* 1. 2. xiii. 5.)

Students of Aristotle must decide for themselves how far St. Thomas is really importing a new philosophy into the language of the *Ethics*: my quotations are intended only to show that the βούλησις of Aristotle is without difficulty erected into a distinct *potentia* and placed in the centre of human personality. St. Thomas undoubtedly believed that he had Aristotle's authority for conceiving the power of *voluntas* over the intellect and the passions in the manner already described in this chapter.

(2) If the equivalence of βούλησις to *voluntas* is doubtful, we shall also hesitate to admit that a division of the lower appetite into *irascibilis* and *concupiscibilis* is formally recognized by Aristotle. In the Latin version of the *Ethics* used by St. Thomas *ira* stands for θυμός, *concupiscentia* for ἐπιθυμία, and the doctrine that θυμός and ἐπιθυμία are distinct faculties of the soul we know to be Platonic rather than Aristotelian. Yet again the effect of translation is remarkable, and one cannot go through the *Ethics* and note the passages in which θυμός and ἐπιθυμία are found in company without admitting that it was not unnatural for St. Thomas to believe that Aristotle had divided the passions into two classes. When, for instance, Aristotle is beginning to explain the nature of προαίρεσις, he makes a statement which, in the Latin, is as follows:—

dicentes autem ipsam concupiscentiam vel iram vel voluntatem vel quamdam opinionem non videntur recte dicere. Non enim commune electio est irrationabilium, concupiscentia autem et ira. (Trans. of *Nic. Eth.* iii. 1111. *b.* 10.)

Referring to the four things here distinguished from *electio*, St. Thomas says in the Commentary:—

et simpliciter in his quatuor comprehenduntur omnia principia humanorum actuum; quae sunt ratio, ad quam pertinet opinio; appetitus rationalis, qui est voluntas; appetitus sensitivus, qui dividitur in irascibilem, ad quem pertinet ira, et concupiscibilem, ad quem pertinet concupiscentia. (*Eth.* iii. 5.)

In thus taking *ira* and *concupiscentia* to be representative names for two distinct *potentiae* St. Thomas certainly believes that he is giving a faithful account of Aristotle's intention.

(3) With regard to the native superiority of the *irascibilis*, due to its greater proximity to reason, St. Thomas was on far less debatable ground. At least one chapter of the *Ethics* (*Nic. Eth.* vii. 6) is perfectly in harmony with the view propounded in the *Summa*, and from the Commentary on that chapter one may quote such statements as:—

dicit quod ira videtur aliqualiter audire rationem, inquantum scilicet iratus quodammodo ratiocinatur quod propter iniuriam sibi factam debet inferre vindictam . . . in animalibus autem carentibus ratione invenitur quidem ira, sicut et alia opera rationi similia, ex naturali instinctu. (*Eth.* vii. 6.)

The conclusion of the same passage is:—

et inde est quod ira aliqualiter consequitur rationem, non concupiscentia, quae sequitur solum impetum proprium. Per hoc autem est aliquid turpe in rebus humanis quod est praeter rationem. Sic igitur patet quod incontinens concupiscentiae est turpior quam incontinens irae. (Ibid.)

One may object that Aristotle meant by *ira* and *concupiscentia* only single passions, whereas St. Thomas takes them to be separate groups: but, apart from this point, St. Thomas could reasonably assume that Aristotle supported him in declaring the superiority of the irascible over the concupiscent.

(4) The manipulation of Aristotle's list of passions provides a more instructive example of St. Thomas's method. The Latin version of *Nic. Eth.* ii. 1105, *b.* 21. is this:—

dico autem passiones quidem concupiscentiam, iram [ira here stands for ὀργή], timorem, audaciam, invidiam, gaudium, amicitiam, odium, desiderium, zelum, misericordiam, et universaliter quibus sequitur delectatio vel tristitia.

In the Commentary St. Thomas first classifies the passions in his own manner and then continues:—

et ideo enumerando passiones dicit quod passiones sunt concupiscentia, quam nominamus desiderium, et ira, et timor, et invidia, quae continetur sub tristitia, et gaudium, quod

continetur sub delectatione (est enim delectatio non corporalis sed interiori apprehensione consistens), et amicitia, et odium, et desiderium, quod differt a concupiscentia eo quod concupiscentia est delectationis corporalis, desiderium autem cuiuslibet alterius delectabilis. Addit autem zelum et misericordiam, quae sunt species tristitiae: nam misericordia est tristitia de malis alienis, zelus autem est tristitia de hoc quod homo deficit ab his quae alii habent. (*Eth.* ii. 5.)

Let us consider the permutations and combinations here effected. At first sight Aristotle appears to supply eight of the eleven passions required by St. Thomas (eight if we count *amicitia* as *amor*), namely: —

amor et odium	timor et audacia
desiderium	ira
gaudium et tristitia	

But (*a*) *fuga*, *spes*, and *desperatio* are missing altogether, (*b*) the meaning of *desiderium* has to be somewhat modified, (*c*) *zelus*, *invidia*, and *misericordia* have to be reduced to *tristitia*, (*d*) *delectatio* and *concupiscentia* are apparently superfluous. Most of these points, however, cause no real difficulty. The subordinate species of *tristitia* are frequently recognized by St. Thomas himself, without reference to Aristotle, and he is also accustomed to distinguish between higher and lower forms of desire and pleasure, and to employ for that purpose some such distinction of terms as *gaudium* and *delectatio*. Thus he says in the *Summa*: —

nomen gaudii non habet locum nisi in delectatione quae consequitur rationem. Unde gaudium non attribuimus brutis animalibus sed solum nomen delectationis. (*S.* i. 2. xxxi. 3.)

There will be other occasions for discussing the full meaning of this distinction, but at present I will confine myself to the one point of real discrepancy between Aristotle and St. Thomas, namely, the omission of *spes* and *desperatio* from Aristotle's list of passions. That *fuga* also is unmentioned is a trifling matter, for its existence would be involved in the mention of *concupiscentia* or *desiderium*. But it is curious that St. Thomas should offer no explanation whatever of Aristotle's failure to include *spes* in his catalogue, nor can one judge very con-

fidently whether he supposed the omission to be deliberate or accidental. What we do find, however, is that St. Thomas contrives to avail himself of several statements in the *Ethics* and the *Rhetoric* when he is working out his own account of *spes*. For example, the question, *utrum spei contrarietur desperatio*, produces an answer in which the following words occur:—

obiectum autem spei . . . secundum quod consideratur cum impossibilitate obtinendi, habet rationem repulsivi; quia, ut dicitur, 'cum ventum fuerit ad aliquid impossibile tunc homines discedunt,' et sic respicit hoc obiectum desperatio. (*S.* 1. 2. xl. 4.)

The allusion is to *Nic. Eth.* iii. 1112. *b.* 24, and as a matter of fact Aristotle is not thinking, even remotely, of the passion of hope. Nevertheless, St. Thomas thus begins to insinuate that he has the authority of Aristotle behind him; and again, when he passes to the question, *utrum causa spei sit experientia*, the answer to the 'objections' is:—

sed contra est quod Philosophus dicit quod 'aliqui sunt bonae spei propter multoties et multos vicisse', quod ad experientiam pertinet. (*S.* 1. 2. xl. 5.)

The quotation is from *Nic. Eth.* iii. 1117. *a.* 10, and though the word εὐέλπιδες does occur in that context, the true subject of discussion is not hope but the relation of knowledge to virtue in the special case of ἀνδρεία. And once more, the pleasing question, *utrum in iuvenibus et in ebriosis abundet spes*, fully entitles St. Thomas to borrow from the *Ethics* (iii. 1117, *a.* 14) the words *inebriati sunt bene sperantes*, and to infer from the *Rhetoric* (ii. cap. 12) that there are three causes of hopefulness in the youthful, two of which, as it seems, they share with their drunken elders. In all these ways Aristotle is made to contribute to the argument, and no one reading through the account of *spes* in the *Summa* would guess that it was entirely unmentioned in the passage which St. Thomas probably imagined to be Aristotle's complete list of passions. To call the procedure of St. Thomas disingenuous would be too harsh, but we may call it an

interesting example of the way in which a delicate point can be handled.

(5) The passage last quoted from the Latin translation of the *Ethics* ends with the words, *et universaliter quibus sequitur delectatio vel tristitia*, and the Commentary gives the following explanation :—

addit autem quod universaliter ad omnia praedicta sequitur delectatio et tristitia ; quia omnia alia important motus quosdam in bonum et malum, ex quorum superventu causatur delectatio vel tristitia. Unde omnes aliae passiones terminantur ad delectationem et tristitiam. (*Eth.* ii. 5.)

Side by side with this we may place a previous statement of Aristotle's and the accompanying comment. The translation of *Nic. Eth.* ii. 1104. *b.* 13. . . is :—

si virtutes sunt circa actus et passiones, omni autem actui et passioni consequitur delectatio et tristitia, et propter hoc utique erit virtus circa delectationes et tristitias.

Upon this St. Thomas remarks :—

ad omnem passionem sequitur delectatio vel tristitia : quia passio animae nihil aliud est quam motus appetitivae virtutis in prosecutione boni vel in fuga mali. Cum ergo provenit bonum in quod appetitus tendit, vel cum vitat malum quod refugiebat, sequitur delectatio. Quando autem est e converso, sequitur tristitia. (*Eth.* ii. 3.)

In these passages we perceive the Aristotelian basis for St. Thomas's treatment of *gaudium* (or *delectatio*) and *tristitia*. A modern student probably interprets Aristotle quite otherwise, supposing him to mean only that every passion is accompanied by some degree of pleasure or pain. But for St. Thomas the ἕπεται of Aristotle implies a subsequent and eventual state of feeling, the quiescence of joy or sadness which is contrasted with the transience of anger, fear, and other passions. Here, in fact, one can only say that Aristotle is made to support a certain doctrine by a perfectly unconscious misinterpretation of his meaning.

Enough has been said on this topic to prove that Aristotle was at least one of the authorities upon whom St. Thomas

relied in his analysis of reason, will, and sensual appetite. We must therefore expect that when the good and evil, the virtues and vices of men are examined by St. Thomas and brought into relation with the faculties of the soul, the connexion with Aristotle will never be broken. At the same time, we have found no warrant for assuming that the Aristotelianism of St. Thomas will be exactly such as our own judgement would approve, or that the Aristotelian element will ever be unmixed with others.

CHAPTER VII

THE CLASSIFICATION OF MORAL VIRTUES.

VIRTUES are a species of *habitus*, and *habitus* are developed states of *potentiae*. There is, therefore, an easy transition from the analysis of the soul to the classification of virtues. St. Thomas distinguishes three orders of virtue, but extracts them all from the definition, said to be 'collected' from St. Augustine:—

virtus est bona qualitas mentis, qua recte vivitur, qua nullus male utitur, quam Deus in nobis sine nobis operatur. (*S.* 1. 2. lv. 4, etc.)

A good deal of modification and explanation is needed before this form of words can yield all that St. Thomas requires. First he substitutes *habitus*, or *habitus operativus*, for the more general *qualitas*, but even then the term is too wide for virtue. For, as he says:—

habituum operativorum aliqui sunt semper ad malum, sicut habitus vitiosi; aliqui vero quandoque ad bonum et quandoque ad malum, sicut opinio se habet ad verum et falsum. Virtus autem est habitus semper se habens ad bonum. (Ibid.)

Hence the words *qua recte vivitur* are required to distinguish virtues from vices, and the words *qua nullus male utitur* to prevent confusion of virtues with habits morally ambiguous. Down to this point, then, with the last clause omitted, St. Augustine's definition covers all virtues except those due to the special operation of divine grace. But St. Thomas is not quite satisfied. He intends to use *virtus*, for the most part, in a sense which will always relate it to the conduct of *voluntas*, but he knows that the word has not been always so used in philosophy, and he does not wish altogether

to ignore the *virtus intellectualis* of Aristotle. He says, therefore :—

dupliciter autem habitus aliquis ordinatur ad bonum actum, uno modo inquantum per huiusmodi habitum acquiritur homini facultas ad bonum actum . . . alio modo aliquis habitus non solum facit facultatem bene agendi, sed etiam facit quod aliquis recte facultate utatur. (*S.* 1. 2. lvi. 3.)

Now the mere acquisition of a *facultas* is not enough, for the will is not thereby determined to choose good rather than evil. Hence St. Thomas continues :—

primi vero habitus non simpliciter dicuntur virtutes, quia non reddunt bonum opus nisi in quadam facultate, nec simpliciter faciunt bonum habentem . . . et propter hoc plerumque scientia et ars contra virtutem dividitur, quandoque autem virtutes dicuntur. (Ibid.)

The difference between the bare possession of a *facultas* and the habitually good use of it is, roughly, the difference between an intellectual and a moral virtue. We must not, indeed, infer that the speculative intellect cannot be the seat of a virtue involving *bonus usus* as well as *facultas*, but the two facts will always be distinct :—

Ex hoc enim quod aliquis habet habitum scientiae speculativae non inclinatur ad utendum, sed fit potens speculari verum in his quorum habet scientiam. Sed quod utatur scientia habita, hoc est movente voluntate : et ideo virtus quae perficit voluntatem, ut caritas vel iustitia, facit etiam bene uti huiusmodi speculativis habitibus. (*S.* 1. 2. lvii. 1.)

Thus the technical term *virtutes intellectuales* properly excludes an ethical valuation, and if the virtues known by such names as *scientia* and *sapientia* can ever be more than forms of intellectual excellence, this will only be because they acquire a new meaning when philosophy gives place to theology.

All *virtutes humanae*, then, are either moral or intellectual, and the commoner sense of the term applies only to the former. *Prudentia* is the only doubtful case, and to this we shall shortly be able to return. There is, however, quite another order of virtues, those, namely, to which St. Augustine

refers in the words *quam Deus in nobis sine nobis operatur*. The widest term for these is *virtutes infusae*, because they are 'infused' into man by the gratuitous operation of God; but the commonest examples are the three *virtutes theologicae*. These, says St. Thomas, are more than human:—

dicendum quod fides, spes, et caritas sunt supra virtutes humanas: sunt enim virtutes hominis, prout est factus particeps divinae gratiae. (*S.* 1. 2. lviii. 3. ad 3.)

And again:—

virtutes intellectuales et morales perficiunt intellectum et appetitum hominis secundum proportionem naturae humanae, sed theologicae supernaturaliter. (*S.* 1. 2. lxii. 2. ad 1.)

St. Thomas thus succeeds in evolving from St. Augustine's definition the three orders of virtue; but we can set aside for the present the theological and the intellectual species, and give our whole attention to the moral.

Habitus stands midway between *potentia* and *actus*, and every distinction of *potentiae* must therefore produce a distinction of *habitus*. Yet the more precise specification of habits comes from the side of *actus*: or, in other words, habits are classified, in technical language, *secundum obiecta*. For though every habit does inhere in some *potentia*, which is called its *subiectum*, there may very well be more than one kind of habit in the same *subiectum*, and any such multiplication in the habits must be ascribed to differences in the *ratio obiecti*. It is true that the original discrimination of *potentiae* was itself derived from the side of the *obiecta*, but only the broadest and most generic differences were then taken into account, and, if further sub-divisions of *obiecta* are possible, the virtues will speedily outnumber the *potentiae*. Had we merely two parallel lines of this sort—

subiecta	*obiecta*
intellectus	verum
voluntas	bonum universale
irascibilis	bonum sub ratione ardui
concupiscibilis	bonum sensibile simpliciter

—the virtuous habits could be placed between the lines and it would matter little whether they derived their species

primarily from the right hand or from the left. But when sub-divisions on the side of the object are threatened, we cannot be certain that these will correspond exactly with sub-divisions of the *subiecta* such as we have found in the analysis of the *irascibilis* and *concupiscibilis*. In classifying the moral virtues, therefore, we must certainly not ignore the *subiecta*, but we must bear in mind that the *ratio obiecti* is always the true origin of differences. As St. Thomas says:—

diversitas potentiarum attenditur secundum generales conditiones obiectorum, diversitas autem habituum secundum speciales; unde ubicumque est diversitas potentiarum est diversitas habituum, sed non convertitur. (*S.* 1. 2. lvi. 2.)

The primacy of the *obiectum* once acknowledged, we can safely begin with the *quaestio* entitled *de subiecto virtutis* (*S.* 1. 2. lvi). St. Thomas inquires of each *potentia* in turn whether it can be the *subiectum* of any virtue. *Intellectus* will naturally be the first candidate, but St. Thomas is guided here by the principle:—

subiectum habitus qui simpliciter dicitur virtus non potest esse nisi voluntas vel aliqua potentia secundum quod est mota a voluntate. Cuius ratio est quia voluntas movet omnes alias potentias quae aliqualiter sunt rationales ad suos actus. (*S.* 1. 2. lvi. 3.)

Hence the intellectual virtues, *scientia*, *sapientia*, and *intellectus*, as being *absque omni ordine ad voluntatem* are not to the point, and with them *ars* too may be classed. *Ars* is not exactly a speculative virtue, but neither is it moral:—

Ars vero non pertinet ad scientiam moralem, quae circa agibilia versatur, cum ars sit 'recta ratio factibilium'. (Prologue to *S.* 2. 2.)

But what of the *intellectus practicus*? For it too has its proper virtue, and the peculiarities of *prudentia* must now receive some notice. It is easy to say

sicut appetitus distinguitur a ratione, ita virtus moralis distinguitur ab intellectuali, (*S.* 1. 2. lviii. 2.)

but in human conduct reason and appetite do not work in separate compartments, and St. Thomas has to follow

Aristotle in allowing that *prudentia* is a necessary element in every kind of virtuous action. He teaches, therefore, that

> prudentia secundum essentiam suam est intellectualis virtus; sed secundum materiam convenit cum virtutibus moralibus; est enim 'recta ratio agibilium', et secundum hoc virtutibus moralibus connumeratur. (*S.* 1. 2. lviii. 3. ad. 1.)

But if Prudence is thus a part of every moral virtue, and if, as Aristotle taught, it can no more exist without them than they without it, can *prudentia* be called a *virtus specialis*? The question is not purely verbal, for when, at least, we turn from virtues to vices, it may prove important to decide how far the presence of *imprudentia* in every vice allows the recognition of it as a separate sin. Technically, St. Thomas is of opinion that *prudentia* is distinct from other virtues, for

> cum prudentia sit in ratione, diversificatur quidem ab aliis virtutibus intellectualibus secundum materialem diversitatem obiectorum . . . . sed a virtutibus moralibus distinguitur prudentia secundum formalem rationem potentiarum distinctivam. (*S.* 2. 2. xlvii. 5.)

Beyond this point one cannot at present advance, and *prudentia* must rank as a quasi-moral virtue, inhering in the *intellectus practicus*.

After intellect we come to the *appetitus sensitivus*, with its two parts *irascibilis* and *concupiscibilis*, and no argument is needed to prove that these can be *subiecta virtutum*. Merely as modes of sensual appetite they are common to man and beast, but

> secundum quod sunt rationales per participationem, ut obedientes rationi, sic sunt propriae hominis; et hoc modo possunt esse subiectum virtutis humanae. (*S.* 1. 2. lvi. 4. ad 1.)

The virtues here mentioned by St. Thomas are *fortitudo* and *temperantia*, the former belonging to the *irascibilis*, the latter to the *concupiscibilis*.

There now remains only *voluntas*, and we shall have to consider rather carefully what is meant by a virtue or habit inhering in the will itself. St. Thomas reminds us that the function of a habit is to bring some *potentia* to actuality, whenever the *propria ratio potentiae* is insufficient, i. e. when

the *potentia* cannot assume the proper relation to its *obiectum* without some process of development. Now the will is by nature an *appetitus boni*, and no *habitus* is needed to make it this: but the original inclination of will towards all that is good suffices only so long as, in the phrase of St. Thomas, the good is *voluntati proportionatum*. In plainer words, this means that no special *habitus* needs to be formed in the will until there is a problem of finding the right *proportio* between the agent and some one else. But

si quod bonum immineat homini volendum quod excedat proportionem volentis, sive quantum ad totam speciem humanam (sicut bonum divinum, quod transcendit limites naturae humanae) sive quantum ad individuum (sicut bonum proximi), ita voluntas indiget virtute. Et ideo huiusmodi virtutes quae ordinant affectum hominis in Deum vel in proximum sunt in voluntate sicut in subiecto, ut caritas, iustitia, et huiusmodi. (*S.* 1. 2. lvii. 6.)

We may omit the references to *bonum divinum* and *caritas*, on account of their theological character. The remaining points are (1) that it is part of every man's duty to respect his neighbour's good, (2) that the virtue required for this purpose is *iustitia*, (3) that the *subiectum* of Justice is *voluntas*. In a later part of the *Summa* we find the direct question, *utrum iustitia sit in voluntate sicut in subiecto*, and, after remarking that Justice has nothing to do with cognitive acts, St. Thomas turns to the two species of appetite and, having himself defined Justice as the constant will to render to every man his due, argues thus:—

reddere unicuique quod suum est non potest procedere ex appetitu sensitivo, quia apprehensio sensitiva non se extendit ad hoc quod considerare possit proportionem unius ad alterum, sed hoc est proprium rationis. Unde iustitia non potest esse sicut in subiecto in irascibili vel concupiscibili, sed solum in voluntate. (*S.* 2. 2. lviii. 4.)

Statements so explicit as these need not be supplemented by further quotations, but it is, I venture to say, impossible to exaggerate the importance of the doctrine that Justice, as belonging to *voluntas* alone, is therefore a virtue which has nothing to do with passion.

Approaching moral virtue from the inward side we have quickly reached a result which may be set forth in a simple table:—

subiecta	*virtutes*
intellectus practicus	prudentia
voluntas	iustitia
irascibilis	fortitudo
concupiscibilis	temperantia.

We must remember that, so far, St. Thomas has only aimed at proving that each *potentia* (save the speculative intellect) can be a *subiectum virtutis moralis*. The four virtues mentioned above must therefore be regarded only as specimens, and for a more complete enumeration of the virtues we must turn now to the *obiecta*.

Few sections of the *Summa* are more difficult to interpret than the two *quaestiones* in which St. Thomas works out the full scheme of moral virtues. The difficulty is caused less by profundity of speculation than by the determination of St. Thomas to produce the complete list of virtues named by Aristotle, and at the same time to group and classify them in ways which a modern reader is very unlikely to discover in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. When the discussion is at length concluded, St. Thomas himself seems to contemplate the result without much conviction, and though none of the argument is ever, I think, formally retracted, it is certain that the most elaborate section of it (*S.* 1. 2. lx. 5) exercises but little influence on later sections of the *Summa*. Be this as it may, we cannot afford altogether to ignore a passage which, apart from its actual results, is so admirable an example of method. We may set out, therefore, from the proposition:—

Virtus moralis perficit appetitivam partem animae ordinando ipsam in bonum rationis. (*S.* 1. 2. lix. 4.)

To enumerate the various ways in which this *bonum rationis* can be presented as *obiectum* to will and sensual appetite is, in effect, to enumerate the moral virtues. The first and greatest distinction of *obiecta* is this:—

ratio autem ordinat non solum passiones appetitus sensitivi,

sed etiam ordinat operationes appetitus intellectivi, qui est voluntas, quae non est subiectum passionis. Et ideo non omnis virtus moralis est circa passiones, sed quaedam circa passiones, quaedam circa operationes. (Ibid.)

And again:—

virtutes morales quae non sunt circa passiones sed circa operationes possunt esse sine passionibus; et huiusmodi virtus est iustitia. (*S.* 1. 2. lix. 5.)

The association of *voluntas* and *iustitia* has been already recorded. But now the standpoint is different. St. Thomas is interested not in the *subiecta* of virtues but in their *materia circa quam* or *obiecta*, and from this point of view he separates *operationes voluntatis* from *passiones*. But let us emphasize the distinction still further:—

bonum et malum in quibusdam operationibus attenditur secundum seipsas, qualitercumque homo afficiatur ad eas, inquantum scilicet bonum in eis et malum accipitur secundum rationem commensurationis ad alterum, et in talibus oportet quod sit aliqua virtus directiva operationum secundum seipsas . . . et propter hoc iustitia et partes eius proprie sunt circa propriam materiam. In quibusdam autem operationibus bonum et malum attenditur solum secundum commensurationem ad operantem . . . et propter hoc oportet quod virtutes in talibus sint principaliter circa interiores affectiones quae dicuntur animae passiones, sicut patet de temperantia, fortitudine, et aliis huiusmodi. (*S.* 1. 2. lx. 2.)

St. Thomas is here contrasting the virtue which secures the right conduct of an external transaction between two persons with the virtues which aim only at the due regulation of passion in the individual, and he seems to declare that in the former case the internal affections of the agent make no manner of difference. Now, unquestionably, this peculiar interest in the external operation, which is characteristic of Justice, ought to be remarked with all possible attention: but we shall absolutely misinterpret St. Thomas if we impute to him the doctrine that Justice consists only in external performance, without regard to the agent's inward condition. The words *qualitercumque homo afficiatur ad eas* will, in fact, give a totally false impression unless we understand that

afficiatur is a technical term, closely related to the *affectiones* afterwards mentioned, but inapplicable to the states of *voluntas*. To say that Justice has no concern with the 'affections' of the agent is but another way of saying that *voluntas* is the *subiectum* of Justice, and the less the affections enter into the virtuous act the more deeply is *voluntas* engaged.

St. Thomas speaks in this same place of *partes iustitiae*: for if the business of Justice is to see that every man both gives and receives his due, and if the nature of the *debitum* varies with the nature of the obligation, the simple term *iustitia* will hardly be adequate, and certain subordinate virtues are postulated:—

> ad iustitiam enim pertinere videtur ut quis debitum reddat. Unde omnes huiusmodi virtutes quae sunt circa operationes habent aliquo modo rationem iustitiae. Sed debitum non est unius rationis in omnibus: aliter enim debetur aliquid aequali, aliter superiori, aliter minori; et aliter ex pacto vel ex promisso, vel ex beneficio suscepto. (*S.* 1. 2. lx. 3.)

St. Thomas thus infers the existence of *religio*, *pietas*, and *gratia*, virtues which differ from Justice only as our special obligations to some persons differ from our general obligations to mankind. These secondary virtues, however, need not detain us at present, and we may be content to observe that all virtues illustrating the *ratio iustitiae* are plainly distinguished from all virtues *circa passiones*.

As I hope to show in another chapter, St. Thomas did not doubt that it was Aristotle who had thus drawn a line between *operationes* and *passiones*, and therefore he felt it incumbent upon him to prove that all the Aristotelian virtues, save Justice, were related to the *obiecta passionum*. The Latin names of these virtues are *fortitudo*, *temperantia*, *liberalitas*, *magnificentia*, *magnanimitas*, *philotimia*, *mansuetudo*, *amicitia* (or *affabilitas*), *veritas*, *eutrapelia*; and the problem before St. Thomas was to connect these ten virtues with the eleven passions tabulated in the preceding chapter (ch. vi, p. 113). The discussion is arranged under two headings, the first question being, *utrum circa diversas passiones diversae sint virtutes morales*; the second, *utrum virtutes morales distin-*

guantur secundum diversa obiecta passionum. There is a confusing similarity in the two questions, but in the former St. Thomas inquires whether you may assume that (for instance) three different passions will give three different virtues; and when he has shown that the principle is something less simple than a numerical correspondence, he asks, in the latter case, why the *diversitas obiectorum* which differentiates the passions should not differentiate the virtues in the same way. There is more than one reason why the hope of finding a separate virtue for each separate passion should be disappointed. Aristotle, for instance, had shown that the same virtue could be relative to two contrary passions—a doctrine suggesting that there might be double as many passions as virtues. But other facts have also to be considered, and St. Thomas eventually teaches that within the whole *concupiscibilis* group no diversity of passions diversifies the virtues connected with them:—

diversae passiones concupiscibilis non pertinent ad diversas virtutes morales, quia earum motus secundum quemquam ordinem se invicem consequuntur, utpote ad idem ordinati, scilicet ad consequendum bonum vel ad fugiendum malum. (*S.* 1. 2. lx. 4.)

He means that one and the same *bonum* will excite first *amor*, then *concupiscentia*, then *delectatio*; just as one and the same *malum* will produce first *odium*, then *fuga*, then *tristitia*. The passions form a developing series, but the same virtue, namely *temperantia*, will regulate them all. On the other hand, St. Thomas holds that

passiones irascibilis non sunt unius ordinis, sed ad diversa ordinantur. Nam audacia et timor ordinantur ad aliquod magnum periculum; spes et desperatio ad aliquod bonum arduum, etc. (Ibid.)

He thus deduces a separate virtue from each pair of passions belonging to the *irascibilis*, and also attaches a special virtue to *ira*, the passion 'without a contrary'. The attempt to arrive at a complete list of virtues by a bare consideration of the various passions is thus unsuccessful, but not wholly barren. For we are able to tabulate:—

mansuetudo	circa	iras
fortitudo	„	timores et audacias
magnanimitas	„	spem et desperationem
temperantia	„	passiones concupiscibilis.

Yet even this result is almost accidental: for, evidently, it is not because there are so many passions, or even pairs of passions, that a certain number of virtues is discovered. The true principle, now slowly emerging, is that diversity of passions yields a corresponding distinction of virtues only when the *obiecta* which stimulate the passions are such as to produce specific distinctions among the virtues also. As St. Thomas says:—

perfectio virtutis ex ratione dependet; perfectio autem passionis ex ipso appetitu sensitivo. (*S.* 1. 2. lx. 5.)

The same object may stand in various relations to passion while maintaining but a single relation to reason. In how many ways, then, can man, as a rational being, apprehend his own *bonum* (or *malum*)? The answer to this question will provide an exhaustive list of the virtues *circa passiones*. Passion is now the sphere in which reason is operating (for we have done with *voluntas* and *iustitia*), but reason does not always agree with passion in the discrimination of *obiecta*.

In point of fact, there are still six of Aristotle's virtues to be evolved, and here St. Thomas begins to be obscure. His analysis of *bonum* (loc. cit.) begins with a reference to the *bonum hominis quod est obiectum amoris, concupiscentiae, et delectationis*. The passions here named all belong to the *concupiscibilis*, and we naturally conclude that St. Thomas, being satisfied with his previous account of the virtues regulating the 'irascible' passions, is going to confine himself to the concupiscent mode of appetite. But now he begins to dwell on the twofold form of *concupiscentia* and *delectatio* (cf. ch. vi. p. 120), with the result that the *irascibilis* makes an inconvenient reappearance. In an earlier analysis of the passions St. Thomas says that *concupiscentiae* are either *naturales* or *non naturales*: the latter term does not mean

'unnatural' in a bad sense, but applies to a class of desires not proper to the nature which man shares with other animals (*S.* 1. 2. xxx. 3), and St. Thomas adds that Aristotle had called the lower desires *irrationales*, the higher *cum ratione*. In the same way, a lower *delectatio* is distinguished from a higher *gaudium* (e.g. in *S.* 1. 2. xxxi. 3), and sometimes higher and lower are related, respectively, to *apprehensio interior* and *apprehensio exterioris sensus* (*S.* 1. 2. xxxv. 2). The transference of these distinctions to the passage wherein the *bonum hominis* is analysed is productive of notable results, but there are so many other facts to be considered in that analysis that I will try to set them all down together.

(1) The distinction between *sensus exterior* and *interior apprehensio* answers to a distinction between *bona corporis* and *bona animae*, but it is more common with St. Thomas to regard money and other external goods as a third and intermediate class. Money is said to be *ordinabilis de se ad bonum corporis*, but it is related to the *interior apprehensio*, and is rarely, if ever, classed with the typical *bona corporis*. We shall, therefore, be justified in following the usual custom of St. Thomas and classifying *bona* in this way:—

sensus exterior . .	(*a*) bona corporis
apprehensio interior . . .	(*b*) bona exteriora (*c*) bona animae.

(2) St. Thomas also observes that one may regard good things either *in ordine ad se* or *in ordine ad alios*.

(3) He reminds us, too, that good things may be considered either *absolute* or *cum arduitate quadam*—a clear intimation that he does not intend to keep within the bounds of the *concupiscibilis*.

The problem is, then, to decide how many virtues are relative to the various sorts of *bona*, when these other qualifications are also remembered. Denoting the classes of *bona* by the same letters as before, we begin with:—

(*a*) The *bona corporis*. St. Thomas teaches that of the external bodily senses, only touch (with which taste is included) offers a serious opposition to the commands of reason. Thus no virtue is connected with the pleasures of sight, sound, or

smell, but *temperantia* regulates the enjoyment of the *delectabilia ciborum et venereorum*. This kind of desire has no superior form, involving the *ratio ardui*, for the things which stimulate the sense of touch are *quaedam infima*, and belong to man in his animal character.

(*b*) With money and all *bona exteriora* the distinction between *absolute* and *cum arduitate* does assert itself. Hence St. Thomas discovers two virtues, *liberalitas* which controls the simple love, desire, or enjoyment of money, and *magnificentia* which should guide men in their more ambitious kinds of expenditure.

(*c*) Of *bona animae* the typical example is *honor*, and since honour may be coveted on a higher and a lower scale, it, too, demands two virtues, *magnanimitas* and *philotimia*.

Three virtues still remain, and to arrive at these we must consider good things not as objects of a purely personal desire but *in ordine ad alium*. In social intercourse there are many occasions on which the *bonum rationis* lies in suitable behaviour to others; and since relations with other men are sometimes serious, sometimes of a lighter character, St. Thomas produces two graver virtues, *affabilitas* and *veritas*, and one less grave, *eutrapelia*. The end of the whole matter is that eight virtues have come out of the analysis of *bonum*, and these eight can be tabulated thus:—

virtutes	*obiecta*
temperantia	bona corporis
liberalitas magnificentia	bona exteriora eadem cum arduitate
philotimia magnanimitas	bona animae eadem cum arduitate
(*a*) affabilitas (*a*) veritas (*b*) eutrapelia	bona in ordine ad alium (*a*) seria (*b*) iocosa

This gives us eight virtues (of which *temperantia* and *magnanimitas* had appeared already), and since *iustitia*, *fortitudo*, and *mansuetudo* have been produced by what seemed to be different methods, the Aristotelian list is at length completed. I must repeat, however, that there is some real obscurity in the argument of St. Thomas, and also, I think, a greater pretence of variety in principle than is necessary. But let me try to explain the real causes of confusion.

There are really two, and only two, important ways of grouping the virtues, namely, *secundum subiecta* and *secundum obiecta*. Unfortunately, the passions belong, in one sense, to the *subiecta*, in another, to the *obiecta*. For the *subiecta virtutum* are simply the *potentiae* of the soul, and the passions are, from one point of view, subdivisions of the two lowest *potentiae*. But, again, all the moral virtues, save Justice, are *circa passiones*; which means that the passions are their *materia circa quam*, and from this point of view the study of the passions themselves is imperceptibly replaced by a study of the *obiecta passionum*. We are then obliged to ask whether the grouping of the passions, regarded as parts of certain *potentiae*, is identical with the grouping of them when regarded as the field or object of certain virtues. St. Thomas has proved that this is not so, since the same *obiecta* may differentiate passions in one way and virtues in another: but the point which becomes obscured in the intricacies of the argument is that, in the end, all the moral virtues are classified *secundum obiecta*, while the passions, in their subjective character, have nothing whatever to do with it. St. Thomas himself does not help us, for even at the close of the whole discussion he states that the virtues are distinguished

> secundum diversas materias, vel secundum diversas passiones, vel secundum diversa obiecta (*S.* 1. 2. lx. 5),

thus suggesting that he has employed three different principles. But a little reflection will prove that the two former modes are only tentative, and that they succeed only in so far as they are identical with the last. For (1) in the words *secundum diversas materias* St. Thomas alludes to the separa-

tion of Justice from the other virtues, and means that *operationes* and *passiones* are different *materiae*. But *materia* is here but the thinnest of veils for *obiectum*, and one might say with perfect accuracy that Justice is cut off from all other virtues because *bonum alienum* is an object generically distinct from all species of *bonum sensibile*. (2) Four virtues were discovered *secundum diversas passiones*, but St. Thomas himself shows that two of them (*temperantia* and *magnanimitas*) can be specified *secundum obiecta*; and the only reason why *fortitudo* and *mansuetudo* are not also placed on that footing is that their *obiecta* cannot be fully disclosed by the analysis of *bonum* alone. For the passions regulated by Courage and Gentleness are relative, wholly or partly, to *mala*. Courage is *circa timores et audacias*, and St. Thomas tells us that

> cum timor fugam quamdam importet, primo et per se respicit malum sicut proprium obiectum. (*S.* 1. 2. xlii. 1.)

That is to say, a certain kind of *malum* excites fear, and the courageous man is he who displays the right behaviour in face of the impending evil. *Mansuetudo*, again, is *circa iras*, and *ira* is provoked by something which appears injurious and, consequently, evil. It is true that revenge is conceived as a good, and therefore

> ira respicit unum obiectum secundum rationem boni, scilicet vindictam quam appetit, et aliud secundum rationem mali, scilicet hominem nocivum, de quo vult vindicari. (*S.* 1. 2. xlvii. 1.)

But the passion controlled by *mansuetudo* does, at least, imply the presence of something conceived as an evil, and St. Thomas could not very well have deduced this virtue from an analysis of the *bonum sensibile*. There is no doubt, then, that all purely moral virtues can and ought to be classified *secundum obiecta*, though other methods of grouping them may sometimes be useful. The following table is fairly accurate. I am aware that some of the conjunctions of virtues here presented are not the same as were derived from the threefold division of *bona* previously adopted (p. 135), but the reasons

for the differences are so evident that I trust no explanation is required.

virtutes	*obiecta*
iustitia	bonum alienum
magnanimitas magnificentia	bonum arduum (in ordine ad se)
mansuetudo fortitudo	malum arduum (in ordine ad se)
philotimia liberalitas temperantia	bonum absolute sumptum, in ordine ad se
veritas affabilitas eutrapelia	bonum absolute sumptum, in ordine ad alium

But though St. Thomas is, if we press him, consistent in classifying the virtues *secundum obiecta*, I cannot think that he succeeds in reconciling this classification with the arrangement of virtues in accordance with their *potentiae*. However true it is that *obiecta*, not *subiecta*, are the true basis of classification, St. Thomas is absolutely committed to two propositions, (1) that every virtue inheres in some *potentia* of the soul, (2) that virtues inhering in one *potentia* must be of a different grade or type from those inhering in any other. We should, therefore, expect the classification *secundum obiecta* to increase the number of virtues, but not to alter the positions indicated by a study of the *potentiae*. Hence I should maintain that St. Thomas falls into inconsistency when, by duplicating *concupiscentia* and *delectatio*, he is driven to assert that

liberalitas et philotimia videntur esse in concupiscibili, magnificentia vero et magnanimitas in irascibili. (*S.* 1. 2. lx. 5.)

That the two latter virtues are appropriate to the *irascibilis*

no one will wish to deny, but, if so, they ought not to be associated with passions of the *concupiscibilis*. The fault lies rather with St. Thomas's rigid classification of the passions than with his broader conception of the soul and its faculties. All appetite is *appetitus boni*, and the irascible form of it aims at *bonum sub ratione ardui*. Now, in his original account of the matter, St. Thomas taught that the *ardua* were only incidental to the pursuit of the *bona* desired by the *concupiscibilis*; but afterwards, when he introduces *bona animae*, or even *bona exteriora*, he shows that the higher mode of sensual appetite strives after good things which are beyond the range of the *concupiscibilis*. Had he chosen to teach from the beginning that *concupiscentia*, in a limited and carnal sense, belonged to the *concupiscibilis*, whereas the passions of the *irascibilis*, so far as positive, were themselves higher modes of concupiscence, there might have been no inconsistency.

There are, however, other difficulties of a similar kind. With regard to the three social virtues, St. Thomas says:—

> bonum hominis in ordine ad alium non videtur arduitatem habere, sed accipitur ut absolute sumptum, prout est obiectum passionum concupiscibilis. (*S.* 1. 2. lx. 5.)

Surely, then, we ought to infer that *affabilitas*, *veritas*, and *eutrapelia* rank below all virtues proper to the *irascibilis*? St. Thomas, too, will declare in due course that

> fortitudo, quae appetitivum motum subdit rationi in his quae ad mortem et vitam pertinent, primum locum tenet inter virtutes morales quae sunt circa passiones. (*S.* 1. 2. lxvi. 4.)

Yet it is impossible to estimate these social virtues as though they were on the same sort of level as *temperantia*, and we shall see that, in his more elaborate scheme of the virtues, St. Thomas brings them into the company of Justice. I may add, too (without stopping now to adduce the evidence), that the position of both *liberalitas* and *mansuetudo* is afterwards re-considered; and we are forced, at last, to conclude that there is no possibility of exhibiting, in a diagram or otherwise, the relation of the virtues to their *potentiae* without clashing either

with the arrangement *secundum obiecta* or with some modification afterwards introduced by St. Thomas. I have hinted more than once that the interpretation of Aristotle is the root of the difficulty, and in the following chapter we may come to admit that no satisfactory arrangement of the virtues is possible until the Aristotelian tradition is subordinated to another.

CHAPTER VIII

ARISTOTLE AND THE CARDINAL VIRTUES

Of his intention to follow Aristotle in the systematizing of moral virtues St. Thomas has already supplied abundant evidence. Yet the comparison of Aristotle with other authorities will be assisted if we realize still more clearly that St. Thomas supposed himself to be deriving from the *Nicomachean Ethics* the most remarkable points of his own doctrine. Let us return, therefore, for a moment to the conception of Justice as the virtue *circa operationes*. Aristotle observes in his second book that the virtues are περὶ πράξεις καὶ πάθη (*Nic. Eth.* ii. 1104. b. 13), or, as it became in the Latin version, *circa actus et passiones*. I may add that *operationes* is more common than the *actus* here used as a translation of πράξεις, and that *actiones* is also found. But, though the three terms are not necessarily synonymous, St. Thomas employs them without change of meaning for this particular purpose. Now when he comes to these words of Aristotle, St. Thomas writes in his commentary: —

> Omnis virtus moralis est circa actus, sicut iustitia, quae est circa emptiones et venditiones et alia huiusmodi, vel circa passiones, sicut mansuetudo, quae est circa iras. (*Eth.* ii. 3.)

There can be no doubt, then, that in the brief expression, *circa actus et passiones*, St. Thomas sees a forecast of the exceptional position of Justice, and so, again, at the end of the fifth chapter of the third book, when Aristotle is about to begin his analysis of the several virtues, the preface of St. Thomas is this: —

> Postquam determinavit de virtutibus moralibus in communi, hic incipit determinare de singulis in speciali. Et primo determinat de virtutibus quae sunt circa passiones interiores, secundo de iustitia et iniustitia, quae est circa operationes exteriores. (*Eth.* iii. 14.)

The fifth book deals with Justice alone, and about three lines from the beginning Aristotle makes a statement which is rendered in Latin:—

Videmus utique omnes talem habitum volentes dicere iustitiam a quo operativi iustorum sunt, et a quo iusta operantur et volunt iusta.

In the Commentary St. Thomas has:—

Virtutes enim et vitia de quibus supra dictum est sunt circa passiones; quia scilicet in illis principaliter consideratur qualiter homo interius afficiatur secundum passiones, sed quid exterius operetur non consideratur nisi ex consequenti inquantum scilicet operationes exteriores ex interioribus passionibus proveniunt. Sed circa iustitiam et iniustitiam praecipue attenditur quid homo exterius operetur: qualiter autem afficiatur interius non consideratur nisi ex consequenti, prout scilicet aliquis iuvatur vel impeditur circa operationem. (*Eth.* v. 1.)

And later on we find:—

Et est considerandum quod convenienter notificavit iustitiam per voluntatem, in qua non fiunt passiones, et tamen est exteriorum actuum principium, unde est proprium subiectum iustitiae, quae non est circa passiones. (Ibid.)

Through the conversion of *βούλονται τὰ δίκαια* into *volunt iusta* St. Thomas discovers the whole doctrine of Justice inhering in a passionless *voluntas* and regulating external transactions without regard to the agent's 'affections'. Yet, as before, we must not imagine that the inward state of the agent is disregarded, for, following Aristotle again, St. Thomas shows that no *iniustificatio* necessarily proves its author *iniustus*. In the abstract such an act as adultery is always unjust, but the true guilt of injustice is not incurred when the act is committed *ex passione*:—

talis igitur facit quidem rem iniustam, non tamen videtur esse iniustus, quia non operatur ex electione. Sicut etiam in speciali possumus dicere quod aliquis non est fur, licet sit furatus, quia non est furatus ex electione. (*Eth.* v. 11.)

Were there no such thing as *operationes exteriores* there could be no *occasion* for Justice, even as there could, without the existence of certain passions, be no occasion for Tempe-

rance or Courage. Yet the concurrence of the agent's will is required in every virtuous or vicious act, and most of all in the acts of Justice, where the influence of passion is necessarily excluded and the act voluntary in the fullest sense of the word. The same view of Justice appears when St. Thomas expounds Aristotle's doctrine of the Mean. He distinguishes between *medium rationis* and *medium rei* and argues that in the case of Justice alone the two are identical:—

Cuius ratio est quia iustitia est circa operationes quae consistunt in rebus exterioribus, in quibus rectum institui debet simpliciter et secundum se . . . . aliae vero virtutes morales consistunt circa passiones interiores, in quibus non potest rectum constitui eodem modo, propter hoc quod homines diversimode se habent ad passiones. (*S.* 1. 2. lxix. 2.)

Individuals, he means, differ so much in their moral complexion that the measurement of passion cannot be carried out on the principles of pure arithmetic; but if Justice demands that a sovereign be equally divided among four persons, and you proceed to give ten shillings to one of them, nothing can make your act other than unjust. It does not follow, however, that you are guilty of injustice, for this will depend upon the extent of your knowledge and the disposition of your will.

That St. Thomas supposed his view of Justice to be based on Aristotle cannot be questioned, but I will add a few words upon the arrangement of the other moral virtues in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, as St. Thomas understood it. The general plan of Aristotle is thus described by St. Thomas:—

de iustitia et prudentia hic Philosophus non agit, sed infra in quinto et sexto. Agit autem de temperantia et fortitudine et quibusdam aliis secundariis virtutibus; quae omnes sunt circa aliquas passiones. Sed omnes passiones animae respiciunt aliquod obiectum; quod quidem pertinet vel ad ipsam hominis corporalem vitam, vel ad exteriora bona, vel ad humanos actus. (*Eth.* ii. 8.)

Strictly speaking, this statement makes no provision for the virtue connected with anger, but if we omit the word *bona*, *exteriora* will then embrace the ills as well as the good things of life, and *mansuetudo* will be included. That this is in

accordance with St. Thomas's intention is proved by a subsequent statement in the same *Lectio* :—

> introducit de virtutibus quae respiciunt exteriora; et primo de his quae sunt circa concupiscentias exteriorum bonorum, secundo de virtute quae respicit exteriora mala. (Ibid.)

St. Thomas thus assigns to Aristotle a threefold division of the *obiectum* to which the virtues *circa passiones* are related, viz. :—

corporalis vita
exteriora (bona et mala)
humani actus.

The grouping of virtues corresponding to these is afterwards shown to be as follows :—

temperantia fortitudo	corporalis vita
liberalitas magnificentia philotimia magnanimitas ira	exteriora bona et mala
affabilitas veritas eutrapelia	humani actus.

The last group of virtues need not trouble us, but it is by no means obvious that the others are arranged in a manner agreeable to the suggestions of the *Summa*. The first difficulty is the position of *fortitudo*. Aristotle allies this closely with *temperantia*, and St. Thomas, in his exposition, brackets the two virtues together because both are relative to *principales passiones*, *respicientes ipsam hominis vitam*, whereas *liberalitas* and all in that group are concerned with *secundariae passiones*, *respicientes exteriora hominis bona* (*Eth.* iii. 4) or, as he calls them elsewhere, *quaedam secundaria bona* (*Eth.* iv. 1). But if *fortitudo* is really to be kept on the level of *temperantia* because, as Aristotle says, they are the *virtutes irrationabilium partium* (cf. *Nic. Eth.* iii. 1117. b. 23), they ought both to be virtues of a lower order than all those discussed in

Aristotle's fourth book: for *liberalitas* and the rest of them control passions unknown to all animals but man:—

Sunt enim quaedam passiones ex quorum obiectis bruta animalia non patiuntur, sicut divitiae et honores et alia huiusmodi. (*Eth.* iii. 19.)

On the other hand, *fortitudo* and *temperantia* do not belong to the same *potentia*, and St. Thomas sometimes calls *fortitudo* the highest of the virtues *circa passiones* (cf. *S.* 1. 2. lxvi. 4). The truth seems to be that St. Thomas was in need of a twofold *fortitudo*, just as he was driven to postulate two grades of *concupiscentia*. Man wants one kind of courage to face *pericula mortis* and physical evils, another kind to bear moral and spiritual trials. In other words, there are *mala corporis* and *mala animae*, and St. Thomas does not find it easy to confront them both with a virtue which Aristotle ranks with *temperantia*.

With the exception of *fortitudo*, the virtues are arranged in the Commentary on the *Ethics* very much as we found them in the *Summa*. The *bona exteriora* of the Commentary include both *divitiae* and *honores*, and the term *bona animae* is not mentioned, but this is only a matter of terminology. St. Thomas always teaches that

concupiscentia pecuniae et delectatio non est corporalis sed magis animalis. (*S.* 2. 2. cxvii. 5. ad 2.)

That is to say, money is a *bonum animae* rather than a *bonum corporis*, and if, as a rule, St. Thomas prefers to keep *bona exteriora* as a separate class, we have no right to accuse him of differing from Aristotle on a question of principle. As a matter of fact, Aristotle's discussion of the different sorts of good things in the first book of the *Ethics* (ch. viii) leads St. Thomas to a mention of *bona exteriora*, *bona corporis*, and *bona animae* (*Eth.* i. 12), but the sense of the various terms there is not that which they commonly bear, and no attempt is made to bring the statement of the first book into harmony with the classification of moral virtues. Presumably, St. Thomas thought that the kinds of *bona*, relatively to different ideals of happiness, need not be identical with the kinds of *bona* which classify the virtues.

I shall not pursue any further the subject of St. Thomas's obligations to Aristotle, for the two main points ought not to be doubtful, (1) that St. Thomas attributed to Aristotle a certain theory of Justice, (2) that he experienced many difficulties in reducing to system the other moral virtues named by Aristotle. Our next step must be to seek for an explanation of those difficulties, and I believe that the explanation lies in a very old and simple tradition of moral philosophy, by which there are said to be four 'cardinal virtues', standing above and, in some sense, embracing all others. St. Thomas could hardly know that the special eminence of Prudence, Justice, Courage, and Temperance had been admitted even before the time of Aristotle, but he did know that all the more important moralists from Cicero onwards had placed these virtues in the centre of their systems, nor can we doubt that, but for the recovery of Aristotle's writings, he would have followed the same tradition. But what is the teaching of Aristotle? He does, undoubtedly, include all the cardinal virtues in his catalogue, and one may say that Justice and Prudence, at any rate, are of exceptional importance. But what of the other seven virtues, described in the fourth book of the *Ethics*? I must not, however, present a false issue. It was no part of the orthodox tradition that there should be no other virtues but the cardinal four: the mere fact that Aristotle mentioned others would cause no searchings of heart, for so had Cicero, and, I suppose, every other moralist. But the point was that Cicero and all who followed his example had, in some way or other, reduced all minor virtues to the four cardinal, or, at least, had arranged them in four groups, by reason of their affinity to one or other of the greater virtues. Could it, then, be maintained that Aristotle had represented seven of his virtues as modes, species, parts, or adjuncts of the other four? That St. Thomas did believe it possible thus to deal with Aristotle's virtues is certain, but before we can understand the way to accomplish this feat we must learn something more of the cardinal virtues.

The number of the cardinal virtues St. Thomas is prepared

to determine either by the *principia formalia* (an expression almost equivalent to *obiecta*) or by the *subiecta*. Reason has one characteristic mode of operation in each of the *potentiae*, and thus *prudentia* appears as the virtue of *ratio* (i. e. *intellectus practicus*), *iustitia* of *voluntas*, *fortitudo* of the *irascibilis*, and *temperantia* of the *concupiscibilis*. But St. Thomas tells us that different schools attributed different senses to the term 'cardinal virtues'. (1) There are some, he says, who understand by them only that certain *generales conditiones humani animi* are found in all virtues: but in this case—

haec quatuor sic distincta non important diversitatem habituum virtuosorum quantum ad iustitiam, temperantiam, et fortitudinem. Cuilibet enim virtuti morali ex hoc quod est habitus convenit quaedam firmitas ut a contrario non moveatur, quod dictum est ad fortitudinem pertinere: ex hoc vero quod est virtus habet quod ordinetur ad bonum in quo importatur ratio recti vel debiti, quod dicebatur ad iustitiam pertinere: ex hoc vero quod est virtus moralis, rationem participans, habet quod modum rationis bonum in omnibus servet et ultra se non extendat, quod dicebatur pertinere ad temperantiam: solum autem hoc quod est discretionem habere, quod attribuebatur prudentiae, videtur distingui ab aliis tribus, inquantum hoc est ipsius rationis per essentiam. (*S.* 1. 2. lxi. 4.)

According to this view moral virtue would be essentially single, yet susceptible of analysis into four elements. One of these, indeed, would be of a special order, as alone belonging to the *rationale per essentiam*, but even *prudentia* would hardly count as a distinct virtue, since it must enter into every kind of virtuous action. St. Thomas does not accept this estimate of the cardinal virtues, but he counts it inadequate rather than false.

(2) The next position to be criticized is that the cardinal virtues, though each has its particular province, do, as a whole, embrace all possible forms of moral virtue. St. Thomas admits the prevalence of this opinion, but distinguishes it from his own:—

praedictas quatuor virtutes dupliciter considerare possumus: uno modo secundum communes rationes formales; et secundum

hoc dicuntur principales, quasi generales ad omnes virtutes; ut puta quod omnis virtus quae facit bonum in consideratione rationis dicatur prudentia; et quod omnis virtus quae facit bonum debiti et recti in operationibus dicatur iustitia; et omnis virtus quae cohibet passiones et reprimit dicatur temperantia; et omnis virtus quae facit firmitatem animi contra quascumque passiones dicatur fortitudo. (*S.* 1. 2. lxi. 3.)

Here, then, the four virtues would be distinct, but no other virtues could be recognized. St. Thomas professes no strong opposition to this view, but he is not wholly satisfied.

(3) His own doctrine is then put forward:—

alio vero modo possunt accipi secundum quod istae virtutes denominantur ab eo quod est praecipuum in unaquaque materia; et sic sunt speciales virtutes contra alias divisae; dicuntur tamen principales propter principalitatem materiae. (Ibid.)

The difference between this and the preceding view is not inconsiderable. They agree in assigning a separate province to each of the four virtues, but in one case the cardinal virtue fills the whole of the province, whereas, in the other, the *materia* within each main sphere is divisible into sections, of which the cardinal virtue annexes only the most important. Other parts of the *materia* are then left untenanted, and hence it is possible to introduce secondary virtues which are not merely modes of the cardinal four. St. Thomas does not deny that there is a *generalis conditio* or *modus* in each sphere, but he combines this admission with the doctrine that all virtues are specified by their *materia* or *obiectum*. In preferring this view to others St. Thomas was certainly influenced by Aristotle; for he supposed Aristotle to have specified the virtues on this principle, and he saw that (for instance) the *obiecta* of *fortitudo* and *temperantia* were so narrowly defined that by no stretch of ingenuity could they be made to embrace the whole *obiectum* of sensual appetite.

But the part played by Aristotle in forming St. Thomas's theory of cardinal virtues is not yet sufficiently explained. In the second book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* there is a well-known passage in which Aristotle asserts that no action can be accounted virtuous unless the inward state of the agent

fulfils certain conditions. He contrasts, in this respect, works of art with virtuous actions, and says of the latter :—

quae autem secundum virtutes fiunt, neque si haec qualiter habeant iuste vel temperate operata sunt, sed si operans qualiter habens operetur: primum quidem si sciens; deinde si eligens, et eligens propter haec; tertium autem et si firme et immobiliter habeat et operetur. (Trans. of *Nic. Eth.* ii. 1105. a. 28.)

In the actual commentary St. Thomas says little or nothing to show that he found in this statement a description of the four main characteristics of virtue, out of which the four cardinal virtues are developed; but in other works he makes it clear that this was his opinion. For example, in the opening chapter of the treatise *de virtutibus cardinalibus* we read :—

considerandum est autem quod de ratione actus virtuosi quatuor existunt. Quorum unum est ut substantia ipsius actus sit in se modificata . . . secundum autem est ut actus sit debito modo se habens ad subiectum, ex quo firmiter subiecto inhaereat: tertium autem est ut actus sit debito modo proportionatus ad aliquid extrinsecum sicut ad finem. Et haec quidem tria sunt ex parte eius quod per rationem dirigitur: quartum autem ex parte ipsius rationis dirigentis, scilicet cognitio. Et haec quatuor Philosophus tangit in 2. Ethic. ubi dicit quod non sufficit ad virtutem quod aliqua sint iuste vel temperate comparata, quod pertinet ad modificationem actus, sed alia tria requiruntur ex parte operantis: primum quidem ut sit sciens . . . deinde quod sit eligens, et re-eligens propter hoc . . . tertium est si firme et immobiliter inhaereat et operetur. (*De Virt. Card.* i. 1.)

In point of fact, the details of the interpretation here are not very clear, and I doubt if they agree precisely with the interpretation of the same passage of the *Ethics* suggested in *S.* 1. 2, lxi. 4. obj. 3. But such uncertainty as there is does not affect the main belief of St. Thomas, which is that Aristotle had detected four cardinal characteristics in every virtuous act. The growth of distinct cardinal virtues is then accounted for :—

haec igitur quatuor, scilicet cognitio dirigens, rectitudo, firmitas, et moderatio, etsi in omnibus virtuosis actibus requirantur, singula tamen horum principalitatem quandam

habent in specialibus quibusdam materiis et actibus. (*De Virt. Card.* ibid.)

St. Thomas then proceeds to describe the particular *materia* of each cardinal virtue.

Again, at the point where Aristotle first runs over his eleven moral virtues, St. Thomas feels obliged to make some reference to other classifications. He explains that there are two schools of opinion, one of which distinguishes virtues *secundum generales modos, qui quidem sunt quatuor.* The *modi* are such as we have found in passages already cited, and yield, as usual, the names of the cardinal virtues. St. Thomas then continues:—

quidam igitur istas virtutes generaliter acceperunt, putantes omnem cognitionem veritatis ad prudentiam pertinere, omnem aequalitatem actionum ad iustitiam, omnem firmitatem animi ad fortitudinem, et omnem refrenationem vel repressionem ad temperantiam. Et sic locuti sunt de his virtutibus Tullius et Seneca et alii quidam. (*Eth.* ii. 8.)

How, then, did Cicero and the others contrive to introduce minor virtues? They did it, says St. Thomas, by making all other virtues *species* of the four, and to this view he takes exception:—

primo quidem quia praedicta quatuor sunt talia sine quibus nulla virtus potest esse: unde per hoc non possunt species virtutis diversificari. Secundo, species virtutum et vitiorum non accipiuntur ex parte rationis sed ex parte obiecti: et ideo convenientius Aristoteles virtutes distinxit secundum obiecta sive secundum materias. (Ibid.)

St. Thomas is not contesting the opinion that each cardinal virtue is the centre of a group, but he objects to the term *species*, and believes that in the system of Aristotle the minor virtues—

possunt reduci ad praedictas, non sicut species ad genera, sed ut secundariae ad principales. (Ibid.)

The difference is real to St. Thomas, and, as a matter of fact, a whole division of the *Summa* (*Secunda Secundae*) is given up to an account of the moral virtues and vices, which begins by recognizing only the cardinal four, and treats all other

virtues as *secundariae* or, to use another term, *adiunctae*. We must, therefore, make a short examination of the method adopted in that part of the *Summa*, and must remember that St. Thomas professes to be guided by Aristotle in his mode of subordinating lesser virtues to the cardinal four.

The structure of the *Secunda Secundae* is clearly set forth in the Prologue. After a general consideration of virtue and vice, St. Thomas proposes a more particular scrutiny; but since there is a danger of constant repetition, he would devise some scheme for completing each topic as it arises. Reminding the reader that the specification of virtues is *secundum materiam*, and that it is

> eadem materia circa quam et virtus recte operatur et vitia opposita a rectitudine recedunt,

he infers that the whole subject-matter of moral philosophy can be reduced to the virtues, their adjuncts and their opposites. And thus:—

> tota materia morali ad considerationem virtutum reducta, omnes virtutes sunt ulterius reducendae ad septem, quarum tres sunt theologicae . . . aliae vero quatuor sunt cardinales.

After a remark upon the 'intellectual' virtues, the Prologue concludes with the words:—

> aliae vero virtutes morales aliqualiter reducuntur ad virtutes cardinales, ut ex supra dictis patet. Unde in consideratione alicuius virtutis cardinalis considerabuntur etiam omnes virtutes ad eam qualitercumque pertinentes, et vitia opposita. Et sic nihil moralium erit praetermissum.

This simple programme is rigorously and elaborately carried out, and one may almost say that St. Thomas succeeds in working into his exposition of the cardinal virtues almost everything that any writer of eminence had ever taught about virtue and vice. One of the chief instruments adapted to this vast *reductio* is the innocent word *pars*, and, as a specimen of the method, I will take the discussion of the 'parts' of Prudence. St. Thomas discriminates between *pars integralis*, *pars subiecta*, and *pars potentialis*. The walls and the roof are

'integral' parts of a house: ox and lion are 'subjective' parts (i.e. *species*) of the genus animal: nutritive and sensitive are 'potential' parts of the soul. Applying these senses to the parts of Prudence, St. Thomas sets to work upon a list compiled from at least four sources:—

memoria intelligentia providentia	Cicero.
ratio intellectus circumspectio providentia docilitas cautio	Macrobius (following Plotinus).
eubulia synesis gnome	Aristotle.
eubulia solertia providentia regnativa militaris politica oeconomica dialectica rhetorica physica	Philosophus Graecus [Andronicus].

I shall not labour through the whole process of reducing these 'parts' to order, for it will readily be guessed that, when some differences have been shown to be only verbal, there will remain few activities connected with the rational conduct of life which cannot be classed either as 'integral' or 'subjective' or 'potential' parts of Prudence. I must point out, however, that none but the 'potential' parts will in future concern us, for these are the secondary virtues:—

partes autem potentiales alicuius virtutis dicuntur virtutes adiunctae, quae ordinantur ad aliquos secundarios actus vel materias, quasi non habentes totam potentiam principalis virtutis. (*S.* 2. 2. xlviii.)

Parts of Prudence, in this sense, are Aristotle's *eubulia*, *synesis*, and *gnome*.

Now in the commentary upon Aristotle's *Ethics* we found St. Thomas dissenting from the doctrine that minor virtues should be accounted 'species' of the cardinal four, and after the analysis of the term *pars* the defect in Cicero's position would be described as a confusion of 'potential' with 'subjective' parts of virtue. I do not mean that Cicero had always named the subjective parts and Aristotle the potential, for this would be far from the truth; but, according to St. Thomas, Cicero had conceived the relation of minor virtues to the dominant four in a way not applicable to potential parts. Except for this technical error, St. Thomas persistently discovers such harmony between Cicero and Aristotle that he embodies the contributions of both philosophers with scarcely any admitted discord. I am not insinuating that Cicero alone was the patron of the cardinal virtues—for he was but one out of many; yet one cannot study the account of the cardinal virtues in the *Summa* without remarking the weight attached to Cicero's authority. Thus if we compare the four *quaestiones* in which the parts of the four virtues are classified, we find (1) that with Temperance the actual question is, *utrum Tullius convenienter assignet partes temperantiae* (*S.* 2. 2. cxliii); (2) that with Prudence and Courage Cicero is the author first considered (*S.* 2. 2. xlviii. and cxxviii.); (3) that the same is true of Justice, with regard to its potential parts. In his own pronouncement about Justice, too (*S.* 2. 2. lxxx.), St. Thomas restricts himself almost wholly to Cicero and to those points in which he conceives Cicero to agree with Aristotle. In all these instances the authorities cited are mostly pagan, and (Aristotle being outside the comparison) Cicero would have no superior among these. Some importance belongs, indeed, to Seneca, because he was supposed to be the author of the *Liber de quatuor*

virtutibus, but no one can pretend that, in the eyes of St. Thomas, Seneca approaches to equality with Cicero. So far, then, as there was a point in proving that Aristotle was in radical agreement with other ancient philosophers, there would be an exceptional interest in all that touched his affinity to Cicero. As to Aristotle, it is notable that there is no mention (except in the case of *prudentia*) of the *Nicomachean Ethics* as supplying a list of potential parts for any of the cardinal virtues: that is to say, St. Thomas makes no direct assertion that the virtues of Aristotle's fourth book are potential parts of Justice, Courage, or Temperance. On the other hand, there is no doubt that Aristotle is always worked into the argument. Excellent examples of this are supplied by the parts of *fortitudo*. Cicero gives the name *fiducia*: this St. Thomas identifies with Aristotle's *magnanimitas*, and, having done so, he uses without scruple all that Aristotle had said of that virtue, and, afterwards, even turns *fiducia* into a subordinate part of *magnanimitas* (*S.* 2. 2. cxxviii. and cxxix. 6). Again, the name *magnificentia* is taken from Cicero, but since Aristotle had also employed it (i. e. μεγαλοπρέπεια), St. Thomas has no difficulty in incorporating the teaching of the *Ethics*. One may say, in fact, of St. Thomas's account of the cardinal virtues and their adjuncts that, if the texts are drawn from Cicero and others, it is Aristotle who provides a great part of the comment.

In many ways the classification of virtues in the *Secunda Secundae* is more successful than anything attempted in earlier parts of the *Summa*. The scheme propounded is simpler, and the method of carrying it out is so full of possibilities that it seems to promise to all schools of philosophy a home where they may dwell at peace. Nevertheless, St. Thomas had to sacrifice something for the sake of this harmonious result, and, upon a minute examination of the matter, I believe one must confess that he neither pretends to keep in the same class all the virtues that belong to the same *subiectum*, nor even preserves very faithfully that principle of classifying *secundum materiam sive obiectum* which, ostensibly, he had borrowed from Aristotle. But let us take concrete instances, beginning

with the question, *utrum patientia sit pars fortitudinis.* An objection is put forward :—

fortitudo est circa timores et audacias, et ita est in irascibili. Sed patientia videtur esse circa tristitias, et ita videtur esse in concupiscibili.

St. Thomas allows that this assertion is substantially true, but adds :—

nec hoc impedit quin patientia sit pars fortitudinis, quia adiunctio virtutis ad virtutem non attenditur secundum subiectum sed secundum materiam vel formam. (*S.* 2. 2. cxxxvi. 4. ad 2.)

Here the *subiectum* is frankly set aside, but the sense of the remaining words is not so clear. *Materia* and *forma* look almost like alternative expressions, and the sense of *forma* is not explained. But turn next to an argument about the position of *clementia* and *mansuetudo*, the virtues opposed to the sin of excessive anger. St. Thomas makes them parts of *temperantia*, and therefore has to meet the objection :—

temperantia est circa concupiscentias. Mansuetudo autem et clementia non respiciunt concupiscentias, sed magis iram et vindictam. Non ergo debent poni partes temperantiae.

The answer is :—

Adiunctio virtutum secundariarum ad principales magis attenditur secundum modum virtutis, qui est quasi quaedam forma eius, quam secundum materiam. (*S.* 2. 2. clvii. 3. ad 2.)

Forma, then, or *modus* is contrasted with *materia*, and if it comes to a choice between the two, *materia* has to give way. Can any refinement of sophistry reconcile this statement with others that have been quoted about the cardinal virtues, or with the principles of classification habitually avowed by St. Thomas? But listen to him once more on the subject of the same two virtues and some others :—

Dicendum quod partes assignantur virtutibus principalibus secundum quod imitantur ipsas in aliquibus materiis secundariis quantum ad modum, ex quo principaliter dependet laus

virtutis, unde et nomen accipit: sicut modus et nomen iustitiae in quadam aequalitate consistit; fortitudinis autem in animi quadam firmitate; temperantiae autem in quadam refrenatione, inquantum scilicet refrenat concupiscentias vehementissimas delectationum tactus. Clementia autem et mansuetudo similiter in quadam refrenatione consistunt. (*S.* 2. 2. clvii. 3.)

Now here, though the *modus* accounts for the subordination of *mansuetudo* to *temperantia*, there is an ingenious allusion to *materiae secundariae*, which for a moment might deceive us into thinking that St. Thomas was, after all, only following a principle explained earlier in this chapter. For has he not always admitted a community of *modus* between the cardinal virtue and its adjuncts, even though virtues are always to be specified *secundum materias sive obiecta*? But the point is, that in the case of *clementia* and *mansuetudo* St. Thomas takes the *materia* from one cardinal virtue and the *modus* from another. *Mansuetudo* is undoubtedly *circa iras*, and therefore in the earlier part of the *Summa* (cf. *S.* 1. 2. lx. 4) it appeared as a virtue of the *irascibilis*. But *refrenatio* is the characteristic *modus* of Temperance, and thus it is that St. Thomas steers *mansuetudo* into its eventual position. Such fluctuations of doctrine and expression prove very clearly that St. Thomas could not effect the whole of his purpose in the *Secunda Secundae* without ignoring much that he had previously taught. We may say, if we please, that the *adiunctio* of secondary to cardinal virtues offers a problem not contemplated in the earlier classification of virtues, but the uncertainty about the rank and place of *mansuetudo* is not thus removed, nor, perhaps, are the professions of allegiance to Aristotle so convincing as at first we may have thought.

There are three other cases (*liberalitas*, *veritas*, *affabilitas*) where the *adiunctio* of minor to major virtues is at variance with previous intimations, and the three have one important fact in common, in that the effect of the change is always to transfer to the society of Justice a virtue hitherto declared to be *circa passiones*. Let us attend to each in turn. Of *veritas* St. Thomas says:—

Virtus veritatis convenit quidem cum iustitia in duobus:

uno quidem modo in hoc quod est ad alterum . . . alio modo inquantum iustitia aequalitatem quamdam in rebus constituit: et hoc quidem facit virtus veritatis: adaequat enim signa rebus existentibus circa ipsum. (*S.* 2. 2. cix. 3.)

Truth, indeed, falls short of the *propria ratio* of Justice because it touches a *debitum morale*, not a *debitum legale*; but it is more akin to Justice than to any other cardinal virtue.

Of *affabilitas* (or *amicitia*) we read that

convenit cum iustitia in hoc quod ad alterum est, sicut et iustitia: deficit autem a ratione iustitiae quia non habet plenam debiti rationem. (*S.* 2. 2. cxiv. 2.)

Lastly, of *liberalitas* it is said:—

Liberalitas non est species iustitiae . . . habet tamen quamdam convenientiam cum iustitia in duobus: primo quidem, quia principaliter est ad alterum, sicut et iustitia: secundo quia est circa res exteriores, sicut et iustitia, licet secundum aliam rationem. Et ideo liberalitas a quibusdam ponitur pars iustitiae. (*S.* 2. 2. cxvii. 5.)

In all three cases the kinship to Justice in certain important respects is obvious, and the explanations of St. Thomas admirable. Nevertheless, the difference between virtues *circa operationes* and virtues *circa passiones* appeared to be more strongly marked than anything else in St. Thomas's classification, and we cannot escape some feeling of surprise if three virtues are to be translated from one sphere to the other. But the truth is that no distinction between *passiones* and *operationes* can prevent the ambiguities that must be revealed in practice. For an internal passion, if not checked ere it find expression, must produce external effects; and these may be subversive of that very *ratio* between one man and another which it is the function of Justice to preserve. Hence may be created a complex situation, thus described by St. Thomas:—

Contingit autem quod in operationibus quae sunt ad alterum praetermittatur bonum virtutis propter inordinatam animi passionem: et tunc, inquantum corrumpitur commensuratio

exterioris operationis, est corruptio iustitiae ; inquantum autem corrumpitur commensuratio interiorum passionum, est corruptio alicuius alterius virtutis: sicut cum propter iram aliquis alium percutit, in ipsa percussione indebita corrumpitur iustitia, in immoderantia uero irae corrumpitur mansuetudo. Et idem patet in aliis. (*S.* 1. 2. lx. 2.)

We thus are led to reflect, (1) that *every* internal passion may issue in an external act likely to affect the agent's relations to other men, (2) that the consequent difficulty of correctly estimating visible acts will be greatest in the case of virtues and vices which can hardly exist but in the outward relations of social life. The former reflection shows how Justice must always appear to overlap and usurp the fields proper to other virtues, and how no judge but the *Scrutator Cordis* can discriminate perfectly between one sin and another: the latter will explain how, for instance, *veritas* and *affabilitas*, which, naturally, must be *ad alterum*, are more easily associated with Justice than with a virtue like Temperance. Personal intemperance, no doubt, may have an injurious effect upon others, but whereas 'it takes at least two persons to tell the truth', it takes only one to get drunk.

With regard to *liberalitas*, I may say that the points of difference from Justice are quite as notable as the points of resemblance. St. Thomas says:—

Dicendum quod actus liberalitatis oportet quod fundetur super actum iustitiae: non enim esset liberalis datio si non de proprio daret. Unde liberalitas sine iustitia esse non potest ; iustitia autem potest esse sine liberalitate. (*S.* 1. 2. lxvi. 4. ad 1.)

Liberality, as Aristotle and St. Thomas teach, *non attenditur in quantitate dati sed in affectu dantis* (*S.* 2. 2. cxvii. 2. ad 1), whereas the *affectus dantis* has no interest whatever for Justice. The element of personal feeling is, I think, more obvious in *liberalitas* than in *veritas* or *affabilitas*, but further consideration of that point may be postponed until we have to appreciate the sins opposed to these virtues. I do not know why the third social virtue, *eutrapelia*, is not also converted into an adjunct of Justice, but St. Thomas probably thought

this virtue so unimportant that he did not trouble finally to weigh the claims of Justice against those of Temperance. Formally, however, *eutrapelia* remains subordinate to Temperance.

And now, at the end of two chapters of argument, what is to be said about the classification of moral virtues? All this time I have been writing in the shadow of a promise to connect the virtues with the *potentiae* of the soul, but even the preceding chapter made it doubtful whether the promise could be fully redeemed, and more recently we have begun to doubt whether St. Thomas himself did not in the *Secunda Secundae* abandon even the principle of classifying *secundum obiecta*. The truth seems to be that in his earlier account of the virtues he was anxious to derive all Aristotle's virtues from the principle which he believed to be Aristotelian: but afterwards, when the grouping of all minor virtues round the cardinal four was undertaken, the Ciceronian tradition became dominant and the supposed arrangement of Aristotle had sometimes to be modified. Thus *veritas*, *affabilitas*, and, possibly, *liberalitas* were made 'parts' of Justice, because Cicero and others had so regarded them, but the credit of Aristotle was saved by the admission that feeling entered into these virtues, and that they were not absolutely *in voluntate sicut in subiecto*. The broad and deep conviction of St. Thomas is, as I have argued before, that Aristotle, Cicero, and all the other greater moralists had held the same principles, and that differences between them must, therefore, be more or less superficial. I still think that a diagram may give a useful illustration of the traditions combined, if with doubtful success, by St. Thomas, but I shall omit not a few complications which have been mentioned in this and the previous chapter. St. Thomas gives many other 'parts' of the cardinal virtues besides those included in the diagram, but my object is only to compare two traditions where the comparison is absolutely required. A variation in the number of minor virtues would, for St. Thomas, be no evidence that anything of importance had been omitted or anything superfluous inserted. If, in one sense, all moral virtues could be reduced to four, they could, in another sense,

be expanded to twenty or thirty, without any alteration in principle or in the total content of moral goodness.

Potentiae	*Cardinal Virtues*	*Aristotle's Virtues, as given in S.* I. 2. lx.	*The same Virtues, as grouped by Cicero, &c., in relation to the Cardinal Virtues*	
intellectus speculativus	—	—	—	
int. practicus	prudentia	prudentia	prudentia	
voluntas	iustitia	iustitia	iustitia	veritas affabilitas liberalitas
irascibilis	fortitudo	fortitudo mansuetudo magnanimitas magnificentia	fortitudo	magnanimitas magnificentia
concupiscibilis	temperantia	philotimia liberalitas veritas affabilitas eutrapelia temperantia	temperantia	mansuetudo philotimia ? eutrapelia

CHAPTER IX

THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES: GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT: BEATITUDES

AT the bare mention of theological virtues we feel that the conditions are changed. The intimate fusion of Pagan and Christian elements which pervades St. Thomas's study of the moral virtues can no longer be expected, or if there be any way in which Faith, Hope, and Charity can be brought into the same system as Temperance and Justice, it will hardly be by the simple assumption that Aristotle and Cicero must have taught the same morality as Gregory and Augustine. If the theological virtues were like the intellectual, perfections of certain *potentiae*, but devoid of moral or spiritual quality, they would, indeed, ask of us no more than a formal mention. But, needless to say, this is not so. For theological virtues, even more than moral, are essential to man's ultimate felicity, and are opposed by sins which may cause ultimate damnation. Is Faith a virtue? asks St. Thomas, and answers:—

> fides est virtus, non quidem intellectualis, sed eo modo quo communiter loquimur de virtute, quae producit actum bonum ex bonitate voluntatis procedentem. Nec tamen est virtus moralis, quia non est ordinativa appetitus sensibilis . . . sed est virtus theologica: quod quidem genus philosophi non cognoverunt. (*Sent.* iii, D. xxiii, q. ii. 4. sol. 1.)

This *bonitas voluntatis* is common to the moral and the theological virtues, and if the higher type is thus superimposed upon the lower, we must inquire whether the coincidence is complete or partial, and why both types should be necessary. If the theological virtues embrace the whole duty of a Christian, the moral appear to be superfluous; while, if the moral and intellectual virtues fulfil the whole potentiality of human nature, there seems no room for others of a higher order.

The passage from natural to supernatural virtues requires

that human nature be supplemented by Grace. Upon the difficult doctrine of Grace I can touch but superficially, without any pretence of discussing the historic controversies relating to the effect of supernatural assistance upon the freedom of the human will. St. Thomas, at least, forbids us to suppose that the cardinal virtues suffer a total eclipse so soon as the theological appear above the horizon, or that Grace suspends the free operation of human nature by converting it into a mechanical instrument of the Divine Will. When he asks whether man, by his natural powers, can fulfil the *praecepta legis*, which make up the sum of morality, the answer is:—

implere mandata legis contingit dupliciter: uno modo quantum ad substantiam operum . . . et hoc modo homo in statu naturae integrae potuit omnia mandata legis implere . . . sed in statu naturae corruptae non potest homo implere omnia mandata divina sine gratia sanante. Alio modo possunt impleri mandata legis non solum quantum ad substantiam operis, sed etiam quantum ad modum agendi, ut scilicet ex caritate fiant; et sic neque in statu naturae integrae neque in statu naturae corruptae potest homo implere absque gratia legis mandata. (*S.* 1. 2. cix. 4.)

Now, even in the Aristotelian doctrine, to which St. Thomas subscribes, we know that the *substantia operum* is insufficient if the required *modus agendi* be lacking. If, therefore, Grace alone can inspire man with the true spirit of action, our first inclination is to conclude that moral virtue is useless. But though, undoubtedly, St. Thomas and all Christians believe that nature without Grace must fall short of the divine requirements, we are not to infer that moral virtues are idle, or that the kind of *modus agendi* contemplated by Aristotle is altogether expelled by the advent of Charity. Rather should we say that the moral is presupposed by the theological, and to the last there remains a distinction between the two classes of virtues, and, again, between two classes of sin. Thus when St. Thomas is explaining that virtues can be generated by good actions, he imagines the objection:—

homo non potest vitare peccatum nisi per gratiam Dei . . . ergo nec virtutes aliquae possunt in nobis causari ex assuetudine operum, sed solum ex dono Dei.

To this he replies :—

licet sine gratia homo non possit peccatum mortale vitare, ita quod nunquam peccet mortaliter, non tamen impeditur quin possit habitum virtutis acquirere, per quam a malis operibus abstineat ut in pluribus, et praecipue ab his quae sunt valde rationi contraria. Sunt enim quaedam peccata mortalia quae homo sine gratia nullo modo potest vitare, quae scilicet directe opponuntur virtutibus theologicis, quae ex dono gratiae sunt in nobis. (*S.* 1. 2. lxiii. 2. ad 2.)

In effect, therefore, the *virtutes acquisitae* of moral philosophy can be recognized without prejudice to the *virtutes infusae* of theology, and the mortal sins opposed to the latter form a class by themselves.

Again: it is not by the creation of new faculties in the soul that Grace inspires the theological virtues, but, taking the natural faculties of reason and will, it enables them to become the *subiecta* of virtues higher than Prudence or Justice. To distinguish acquired from infused virtues we must, therefore, have recourse to the *obiectum* or *finis*, and in accordance with this familiar principle St. Thomas writes :—

habitus specie distinguuntur secundum formalem differentiam obiectorum. Obiectum autem theologicarum virtutum est ipse Deus qui est ultimus rerum finis, prout nostrae rationis cognitionem excedit. Obiectum autem virtutum intellectualium et moralium est aliquid quod humana ratione comprehendi potest. (*S.* 1. 2. lxii. 2.)

A merely human morality is not gifted with the higher insight: it contemplates the ends of civil society and the law of natural reason, but that all things find their meaning and perfection in God is not revealed by the *lumen rationis*. Hence St. Thomas can say of the two types of virtue :—

in alia vita hominem perficiunt, acquisitae quidem in vita civili, infusae in vita spirituali, quae est ex gratia, secundum quam homo virtuosus est membrum Ecclesiae. (*Sent.* iii, D. xxxiii, q. i. 2. sol. 4.)

These statements of principle, however, are still too abstract, and the effect of introducing Faith, Hope, and Charity into St. Thomas's system cannot be anticipated without a particular examination of each virtue. I ought to observe here,

as in a previous chapter (ch. vii, p. 126), that the term *virtutes infusae* includes more than the three theological virtues, for Grace permeates the whole of moral life and imparts a new temper even to the cardinal virtues. The theological three are called *principia*:—

unde oportet quod his etiam virtutibus theologicis proportionaliter respondeant alii habitus divinitus causati in nobis, qui sic se habent ad virtutes theologicas sicut se habent virtutes morales et intellectuales ad principia naturalia virtutum. (*S.* 1. 2. lxiii. 3.)

St. Thomas will thus speak of a *temperantia infusa* or *iustitia infusa* as distinct from the 'acquired' form of the same virtues: but for the purpose of defining the respective spheres of infused and acquired virtues we can expect little help from any other of the infused kind except the three whose very names declare their difference from the virtues known to Aristotle or Cicero.

Let us, then, preserve the conventional order and begin with the virtue of Faith. The *obiectum* of Faith is *veritas prima*, those truths about the nature of God which secular philosophy can neither demonstrate nor refute. Yet the differentiation of this virtue from all moral virtues is most evident in the peculiarity of its *subiectum*. The moral virtues were located in the sensual appetite, the will, and (if we include Prudence) the practical intellect; while the intellectual virtues were shown to be virtues only in a secondary sense, which left them without influence upon man's last reward or punishment. But on the same page that cuts moral and intellectual virtues asunder St. Thomas admits that the speculative intellect can be the seat of a virtue unknown to Aristotle, for:—

contingit intellectum a voluntate moveri, sicut et alias potentias; considerat enim aliquis aliquid actu eo quod vult. Et ideo intellectus, secundum quod habet ordinem ad voluntatem, potest esse subiectum virtutis simpliciter dictae. Et hoc modo intellectus speculativus vel ratio est subiectum fidei: movetur enim ad assentiendum eis quae sunt fidei ex imperio voluntatis; nullus enim credit nisi volens. (*S.* 1. 2. lvi. 3.)

The act of assent to Christian doctrine is an act of will rather than of intellect, yet the interest in Truth for its own sake, which is characteristic of Faith, is a clear point of difference from all moral virtues. Prudence, no doubt, is a virtue concerned with Truth, but only for the sake of action, whereas with Faith the *consideratio veri* has, as St. Thomas says, a certain dignity, even apart from its practical reference:—

cum ergo fidei obiectum proprium sit veritas prima, quae, inquantum est finis operis, regulat in opere, fides principaliter erit in intellectu speculativo, et secundario in practico, quia intellectus speculativus et practicus non sunt diversae potentiae sed differunt fine. (*Sent.* iii, D. xxiii, q. ii. 3. sol. 2.)

Faith, as the supreme *regula operis*, overflows from the speculative into the practical intellect, but the vision of Truth is its principal act and, the assent of will being required for such vision, the merit of faith and the sin of infidelity can exist even without reference to the practical rules of life which a Christian will deduce from his faith. At last, therefore, we perceive that there was a reason for including the speculative intellect in diagrams of the soul, even though in secular philosophy the antithesis of truth and falsehood was so distinct from that of right and wrong as to suggest that the contemplative life of reason must be extraneous to the whole drama presented in the *Divine Comedy*. For if *infidelitas* be a sin of the first magnitude, we cannot imagine that Hell has no place for it, and therefore in our survey of the virtues we must find room for Faith. Now to make room for Faith is especially easy, just because it is a virtue of the speculative intellect. Superimpose the spiritual on the moral life, and you see that Faith merely fits into an unoccupied space. The intellectual virtues of Aristotle are irrelevant, and with none of the moral virtues does Faith even appear to coincide. Here, then, we may leave it for the present and turn to the inspection of Hope.

The *obiectum* of Hope, as of all theological virtues, is *Deus ipse*, and here God is to be conceived as the source of eternal beatitude:—

spes facit Deo adhaerere prout est in nobis principium perfectae bonitatis, inquantum scilicet per spem divino auxilio innitimur ad beatitudinem obtinendam. (*S.* 2. 2. xvii. 6.)

Hitherto we have known Hope only as a passion, but as a spiritual virtue it belongs not to the *irascibilis* but to *voluntas*:—

actus spei est quidam motus appetitivae partis, cum sit eius obiectum bonum. Cum autem sit duplex appetitus in homine . . . illi motus qui sunt in appetitu inferiori sunt cum passione, in superiori autem sine passione. Actus autem virtutis spei non potest pertinere ad appetitum sensitivum, quia bonum quod est obiectum principale huius virtutis non est aliquid bonum sensibile sed bonum divinum. Et ideo spes est in appetitu superiori, qui dicitur voluntas, sicut in subiecto. (*S.* 2. 2. xviii. 1.)

No one, however, can read this passage without suspecting that the definition of a special province for Hope will be far less easy than for Faith. There is no unoccupied residence in the soul for it. *Voluntas* is already the seat of the highest moral virtue, and what community can there be between Hope and Justice? In point of fact, the location of Hope in the will does not so much indicate a kinship with Justice as remind us of the many complications in the notion of an *appetitus superior*. The proper object of will St. Thomas defined as *bonum sub communi ratione boni*, and when good assumes the special form of *bonum proximi*, the special virtue of Justice is required. But besides that particular development there is ample evidence that the function of will is to reproduce in the higher life of man the characteristic elements of the *appetitus sensitivus*. The moral life of man is, confessedly, an intermingling of lower and higher activities, and up to a point it is possible to distinguish the virtue of *voluntas* from virtues of the *irascibilis* or *concupiscibilis*: but in the spiritual life, of which the theological virtues are the fountain, the sensual appetite has no place whatever, and the consequence is that such distinctions as are embodied in the terms *irascibilis* and *concupiscibilis* have eventually to be discovered within one and the same *voluntas*. The choice lying only between *intellectus* and *voluntas*, Hope naturally is placed in the latter,

and in this virtue we may almost say that the *irascibilis* reaches its third and final stage. Its original office was only to act as *propugnatrix concupiscibilis*, but soon there came a suggestion that *bonum sub ratione ardui* might denote a special class of good things (*bona animae*), not to be classed with the objects of carnal desire. And now, lastly, the *bonum arduum* appears as the eternal beatitude, most 'arduous' of all good things, for which even to hope with steadfastness is reckoned a virtue. However easy, then, it may be for a professed theologian to separate Hope from the moral virtues, we may reasonably affirm that its position is less manifest than that of Faith; since neither in its *subiectum* nor in its general character is it palpably external to the scheme of life propounded by philosophers.

With the third and greatest of the theological virtues the superficial coincidence of the spiritual with the moral life is carried to a far greater extent. First of all there is the analogy between Charity and Justice, an analogy depending not only upon identity of *subiectum* (both virtues being in *voluntate*) but upon the fact that in both cases the good to be willed by the agent is not obviously to his personal advantage. True, there is such a thing as *caritas in seipsum*, but this only means that a man must not do evil and sacrifice his immortal soul for the sake of another. As St. Thomas says:—

> detrimenta corporalia debet homo sustinere propter amicum; et in hoc ipso seipsum magis diligit secundum spiritualem mentem, quia hoc pertinet ad perfectionem virtutis, quae est bonum mentis. Sed in spiritualibus non debet homo pati detrimentum peccando ut proximum liberet a peccato. (*S.* 2. 2. xxvi. 4. ad 2.)

The preference of self to others in the *ordo caritatis* is, therefore, no objection to the statement that Charity resembles Justice because both are virtues *ad alterum*. Now for Charity the *alter* is first *Deus* and, thereafter, *proximus*, but the more the nature of the virtue is unfolded, the more impossible is it to separate duty to God from duty to our neighbour. Absorption in the love of God does not leave humanity on one side,

for in the profoundly simple words of St. Thomas, *ratio diligendi proximum Deus est*, and therefore, as he continues :—

manifestum est quod idem specie actus est quo diligitur Deus et quo diligitur proximus. (*S.* 2. 2. xxv. 1.)

Charity, then, is a kind of spiritualized Justice or Friendship, and as human friendship is nobler than Justice because it recognizes an obligation more subtle than *debitum legale*, so Charity is nobler than either because God and the image of God in his creatures are the most exalted objects of love.

But even Justice, though of wider range than other moral virtues, is not wide enough to serve as a true parallel to Charity, which in the end is found so to permeate all other virtues that without it they cannot exist in perfection. We have seen that *spes* represents in a spiritual form the virtues of the *irascibilis*, and *caritas* has to reproduce in its own way the still more fundamental *amor* which, belonging, as a passion, only to the *concupiscibilis*, is yet the foundation of all possible virtues because it signifies the ineradicable attraction towards *bonum*. St. Thomas, no doubt, will say :—

amor qui est in concupiscibili est amor sensitivi boni. Ad bonum autem divinum, quod est intelligibile, concupiscibilis se extendere non potest, sed sola voluntas. Et ideo concupiscibilis subiectum caritatis esse non potest. (*S.* 2. 2. xxiv. 1. ad 1.)

Nevertheless, *caritas* takes up into itself the whole of *amor*, and therefore flows through all other virtues as their hidden and life-giving essence. The uniqueness of Charity always survives, because *ubi est specialis ratio boni, ibi est specialis ratio amoris* (*S.* 2. 2. xxiii. 4) and the *bonum divinum* is never confounded with others : but, because no good thing save *Dei fruitio* is ultimate, all virtue save Charity is *vera sed imperfecta* (*S.* 2. 2. xxiv. 7). Hence St. Thomas calls Charity the *forma virtutum*, for :—

per caritatem ordinantur actus omnium aliarum virtutum ad ultimum finem : et secundum hoc ipsa dat formam actibus omnium aliarum virtutum. (*S.* 2. 2. xxiii. 8.)

Herein there is some analogy between Charity and Prudence, for we learn from Aristotle that neither can Prudence exist without the other moral virtues nor they without it. But Charity absorbs and illuminates Prudence itself:—

> ad rectam autem rationem prudentiae multo magis requiritur quod homo bene se habeat circa ultimum finem, quod fit per caritatem, quam circa alios fines, quod fit per virtutes morales . . . unde manifestum fit quod nec prudentia infusa potest esse sine caritate, nec aliae virtutes morales consequenter, quae sine prudentia esse non possunt. (*S.* 1. 2. lxv. 2.)

Charity is thus the condition of all moral virtues and, on the other hand, *cum caritate simul infunduntur omnes virtutes morales* (ibid. art. 3). Only by some kind of mysticism can the whole doctrine of Charity be comprehended, for to reconcile its unity and distinctness with its penetration through all other virtues is, at bottom, the same problem as to understand how the personality of God is compatible with His immanence in all created things and with their individual existence.

Reviewing the facts as a whole, we shall probably confess that a writer wishing to blend in a single picture the moral and the theological virtues might either magnify or minimize the distinction according as it suited his purpose. On the one hand, the points of difference are, theoretically, well defined, and there is no difficulty in giving intelligible reasons for drawing a line between the 'infused' and the 'acquired'. On the other hand, one may easily insist both that the *subiecta* of the infused virtues are those known already to secular philosophy, and that the acts issuing from these virtues seldom bear a character that must visibly differentiate them from acts of morality. The one pronounced exception is that of *fides*, and from no point of view can this virtue be fused with Aristotelian or Ciceronian theories of conduct. I do not say that, in practice, it must be altogether impossible to distinguish sins against Hope and Charity from sins against Temperance, Courage, and Justice, but I do say that a sin connected with *cognitio* or with *consideratio veri* is a thing unknown to philosophers outside the pale of Christianity. St. Thomas says in one place:—

Spes est in homine principium omnium operationum quae ad bonum arduum ordinantur, sicut caritas omnium quae in bonum tendunt, et sicut fides omnium quae ad cognitionem pertinent. (*Sent.* iii, D. xxvi, q. ii. 2.)

From such a statement we learn, indeed, that all virtues and vices inhering in the *concupiscibilis*, the *irascibilis*, or *voluntas*, must have a double aspect, one moral the other theological, but we see also that acts pertaining to cognition, if worthy of reward or punishment, have no standing in moral philosophy, as St. Thomas understood that term.

Before making an end of this chapter I feel obliged to notice certain other ways in which the spiritual or moral laws of conduct can be expressed. First among these stands the list of seven *dona Spiritus*, taken from the eleventh chapter of Isaiah. In the Prologue to the *Secunda Secundae* St. Thomas declares his intention of treating, in each case, *de virtute et dono sibi correspondente*, and his method of fulfilling this promise illustrates once more the two facts, (1) that there is some difference of standpoint between the later and the earlier accounts of the virtues, (2) that St. Thomas is always reluctant to allow that Aristotle was absolutely out of touch with Christian teaching, even though many doctrines were necessarily hidden from his knowledge. As to the reasons why a *donum* is not the same as a *virtus* we need not inquire too narrowly, especially as St. Thomas himself is not very convincing in the arguments which support his own position. Let it suffice that the *dona* receive separate consideration, and let us examine their correspondence with the virtues.

The names of the *dona* are *sapientia*, *intellectus*, *scientia*, *consilium*, *pietas*, *fortitudo*, and *timor*, and there are two ways in which they may be adjusted to a list of seven virtues. Either you may take the three intellectual virtues of Aristotle and the four cardinal, or you may leave the cardinal but substitute the theological three for the intellectual. In his earlier treatment of the topic, St. Thomas unquestionably prefers the seven secular virtues. He admits that the *dona* are *quaedam derivationes* from Faith, Hope, and Charity

(*S.* 1. 2. lxviii. 4. ad 3), but the parallelism between *dona* and *virtutes* is stated as follows:—

virtutes	*dona*
sapientia	sapientia
intellectus	intellectus
scientia	scientia
prudentia	consilium
iustitia	pietas
fortitudo	fortitudo
temperantia	timor.

The collocation of *temperantia* and *timor* is here the least obvious, but St. Thomas explains that the temperate man avoids base pleasures *propter bonum rationis* but, when inspired with the gift of the spirit, he avoids them *propter timorem Dei* (*S.* 1. 2. lxviii. 4. ad 1). Otherwise, the correspondence of the two lists is fairly obvious, and in several cases the names are identical. Nevertheless, St. Thomas makes many alterations in his arrangement when he comes to the *Secunda Secundae*, and even withdraws some of his previous assertions. The scheme of this part of the *Summa* is based, as we know, on the reduction of all virtues to the theological and cardinal, and since St. Thomas desired to make the seven *dona* correspond with these, he was obliged somehow to get rid of the three intellectual virtues. Accordingly, he says in the Prologue (after excluding *ars* and *prudentia*):—

> aliae vero tres intellectuales virtutes, scilicet sapientia, intellectus, et scientia, communicant etiam in nomine cum donis quibusdam Spiritus Sancti. Unde simul etiam de eis considerabitur in consideratione donorum virtutibus correspondentium.

Instead of three intellectual virtues, with three corresponding *dona*, we now find the said virtues appearing only as inferior imitations of certain *dona*, which are themselves set free to accompany the theological virtues. The *dona* primarily affected are *sapientia*, *intellectus*, and *scientia*, and all of these (though now said to be also practical) are partly speculative in character. On the other hand, *fides* is the only speculative virtue, and the correspondence of virtues to *dona* becomes less

easy. St. Thomas places both *intellectus* and *scientia* with *fides*, but reserves *sapientia* for *caritas*, on the ground that

Sapientia quae est donum Spiritus Sancti facit rectitudinem iudicii circa res divinas, vel per regulas divinas de aliis, ex quadam connaturalitate sive unione ad divina, quae quidem est per caritatem. (*S.* 2. 2. xlv. 4.)

Now when *fides* has thus annexed two out of seven *dona*, only five are left to answer to the six remaining virtues, and the result is that one of the virtues must be left without a *donum*. This, in fact, does happen: for *timor* is given to *spes* and *temperantia* is left without provision. The readiness of St. Thomas to make a change of this kind helps us to understand the more important modifications in the systematizing of the virtues.

Dona Spiritus are evidently a theological conception, and cannot be looked for in the works of Pagan authors. Yet St. Thomas finds more than one way of suggesting that Aristotle had anticipated something of the kind. During the first consideration of the *dona* we come upon these words:—

huiusmodi dona nominantur quandoque virtutes secundum communem rationem virtutis: habent tamen aliquid superveniens communi rationi virtutis, inquantum sunt quaedam divinae virtutes perficientes hominem inquantum est a Deo motus. Unde et Philosophus supra virtutem communem ponit virtutem heroicam vel divinam, secundum quam dicuntur aliqui divini viri. (*S.* 1. 2. lxviii. 1. ad 1.)

The allusion to Aristotle's θεία ἀρετή is interesting, and, again, we have seen in the parallelism between *dona* and *virtutes* the anxiety of St. Thomas to bring philosophical traditions into touch with Christian doctrines. For whether one prefer the earlier or the later scheme, the recognition of *sapientia*, *scientia*, and *intellectus* is assured, and it matters but little whether they rank as virtues, to which certain *dona* are attached, or as uninspired forms of the actual *dona*. In either case, St. Thomas wishes to show that, where revelation was lacking, philosophers could still make a forecast of truths that were afterwards to be revealed.

Some of the reasons which justify a mention of the *dona*

Spiritus may be pleaded again in favour of the Beatitudes. St. Thomas says:—

beatitudines distinguuntur quidem a virtutibus et donis, non sicut habitus ab eis distincti, sed sicut actus distinguuntur ab habitibus. (*S.* 1. 2. lxix. 1.)

Their technical definition thus settled, he proceeds to discuss various points connected with them, and of these by far the most interesting is the discovery of a link between the Sermon on the Mount and the types of beatitude distinguished in ancient philosophy. Every one will remember the chapter (*Eth. Nic.* i. 5) in which Aristotle compares the three alternative lives, called in Latin *vita voluptuosa*, *vita activa*, and *vita contemplativa*; and to these St. Thomas contrives to accommodate the Beatitudes of St. Matthew's Gospel. The *vita voluptuosa*, he tells us, is but a hindrance of the true felicity, and therefore our Lord first recites the Beatitudes that will remove this hindrance. Thus *beati pauperes spiritu* bids us despise riches and honours, *beati mites* is a warning against passions of the *irascibilis*, *beati qui lugent* implies that voluntary pain is preferable to indulgence in pleasures of the *concupiscibilis*. These three Beatitudes cover the whole of the *appetitus inferior* and the *bona* which stimulate its action. Next comes the *vita activa*, which is not an obstacle but a preparation for true happiness. In this life it is, in the main, duties to our neighbour that have to be enjoined upon us: hence its two Beatitudes, *beati qui esuriunt et sitiunt iustitiam* and *beati misericordes*, refer to Justice, the virtue of the will, and to Liberality, regarded as *pars iustitiae*. There remains the *vita contemplativa*, and this is commended to us in the Beatitudes *beati mundo corde* and *beati pacifici*. Purity of heart leads to the vision of God, while the peacemaker shows himself an imitation of the God of unity:—

et ideo pro praemio redditur ei gloria divinae filiationis, quae est in perfecta coniunctione ad Deum per sapientiam consummatam. (*S.* 1. 2. lxix. 4.)

It is to be remarked that the number of Beatitudes is given as seven, whereas in the narration of St Matthew there

appear to be eight. As regards the adjustment of the Beatitudes to the three *vitae* the number was probably of no importance, but the temptation to introduce the number seven must have been overwhelming, since this would at once bring about a correspondence with the seven virtues and seven *dona*. The last Beatitude of St. Matthew's account is therefore put aside with the remark :—

octava beatitudo est quaedam confirmatio et manifestatio omnium praecedentium. (*S.* 1. 2. lxix. 3. ad 5.)

Another example of the art of manipulating numbers is found in the treatment of St. Luke's narrative. The Sermon on the Plain mentions only four Beatitudes, but, says St. Thomas :—

Lucas narrat sermonem Domini factum esse ad turbas. Unde beatitudines enumerantur ab eo secundum capacitatem turbarum, quae solam voluptuosam et temporalem et terrenam beatitudinem noverunt. (*S.* 1. 2. lxix. 3. ad 6.)

The four Beatitudes are thus intended to exclude the four elements of this spurious felicity, namely, love of riches (*beati pauperes*), indulgence in food and drink (*beati qui esuritis*), false joy of heart (*beati qui nunc fletis*), and pursuit of human favour (*beati cum vos oderint homines*). And further, we learn that Ambrose had adapted these four to the cardinal virtues :—

paupertas pertinet ad temperantiam, quae illecebrosa non quaerit ; esuries ad iustitiam, quia qui esurit compatitur, et compatiendo largitur ; fletus ad prudentiam, cuius est flere occidua ; pati odium hominum ad fortitudinem. (Ibid.)

Perhaps St. Thomas is not seriously committed to any of these parallels between Beatitudes and virtues, but they testify in a curious way to his belief that even direct sayings of Christ could be foreshadowed by Aristotle and other philosophers.

I shall not stay to discuss a suggestion, taken from St. Augustine, that the seven petitions of the Lord's Prayer could also be adapted to the *dona* and the *beatitudines* (*S.* 2. 2. lxxxiii. 9. ad 3), nor shall I dwell on the more important adjunction of *praecepta* to the virtues. The term *praeceptum*

is applied, as a rule, to the Ancient Law, especially to the Decalogue, and, since some of the virtues were but partly revealed to those living under the old dispensation, the precepts belonging to such virtues were only imperfect and preliminary. Moreover, a discussion of these *praecepta* hardly falls within the scope of this chapter, and had better be reserved for another occasion, when its relevance will be more apparent.

CHAPTER X

THE CLASSIFICATION OF SINNERS AND SINS

THE transition from virtues to vices should not involve any change of method. We still must follow the guidance of St. Thomas, neglecting Dante and his *Inferno* until we can give them our undivided attention. Moreover, we shall naturally expect the course of the argument to be facilitated by recent chapters, for if the virtues can be named and classified, the number and order of the opposing vices ought not to be obscure. Yet though such anticipations are reasonable, there is a grave obstacle to immediate progress, and the nature of this obstacle I have tried to indicate in the title of the present chapter. Sooner or later we must realize, if we have not done so already, that the problem of classifying the species of sin is perfectly distinct from the problem of classifying sinners. Take, as specimens, the two questions—What is theft? and, What constitutes the guilt of theft? If any one supposes that the same answer can suit both questions, he cannot hope to understand either St. Thomas or Dante. For the definition of theft can be settled by legal or even popular usage; but the determination of guilt in a concrete case cannot be effected without searching into the heart of a human being. I do not deny that human law courts have their rough and ready ways of escaping such difficulties, but unless we are going to relapse into the theory of Witte, or something similar, we cannot imagine that Dante would have ignored all that he had learned from St. Thomas and other teachers upon the subject of moral responsibility. Legally, a man commits theft whenever, without physical compulsion or inevitable ignorance, he takes what belongs to another; but the moral classification of such an act will, for St. Thomas, depend upon the *intentio* of the agent, and it is quite possible that the proper name for the act will

be, not *furtum* but, let us say, *adulterium* or *gula*. Now, for the eventual understanding of the Divine Comedy, there can be no doubt that both kinds of investigation are necessary. That is to say, we need to know how many species of sin there are, and how they stand relatively to each other ; but we need also to analyse the conditions under which a man is to be held morally guilty of any sin, be it murder or theft or anger, or what you please. And because neglect of the latter inquiry has, I think, caused the greater errors, I will not attempt to enumerate the classes of sin until we understand more clearly how, relatively to the guilt of an agent, acts can qualify for admission to any class.

Our previous criticisms of Witte should now be of some assistance. The difference between *malum*, *peccatum*, and *culpa* was then discussed, and into the general philosophy of evil there is no need to enter again. Let us start from the fact that an action may be judged good or bad from two points of view, according as we attend to its effect upon some given *ordo* (e. g. civil society) or to the intention of the agent. St. Thomas forbids us to confound the two points of view, and his position is summed up in the words :—

manifestum est quod ista ratio boni vel mali quam habet actus exterior ex ordine ad finem per prius invenitur in actu voluntatis, et ex eo derivatur ad actum exteriorem. Bonitas autem vel malitia quam habet actus secundum se propter debitam materiam et debitas circumstantias non derivatur a voluntate. (*S.* 1. 2. xx. 1.)

An act is bad if it contravenes any positive law of God or reason, and, again, any act is bad, no matter what its external form, if it be done for the sake of a bad *finis*. In the former sense the act is bad *secundum obiectum*, in the latter it is bad *secundum finem*. Now, as St. Thomas is constantly telling us, every act *habet speciem ex obiecto* (*S.* 1. 2. xviii. 2, and *passim*) ; which means that the ordinary and generic description of any act signifies its visible character, as judged by social or legal standards. But the instant we import into the argument the question of the agent's guilt, the outward and immediate *obiectum* may have to be distinguished from the remoter *finis*,

and the moral definition of the act may appear to be quite unwarranted by the visible facts. If, for instance, you steal that you may be able to hire a murderer, theft is the *obiectum*, but murder the *finis*. But if you murder for the sake of robbing the victim, theft then becomes the *finis*. Now, morally, the *finis* outweighs the *obiectum*, for:—

actus humani species formaliter consideratur secundum finem, materialiter autem secundum obiectum exterioris actus. Unde Philosophus dicit quod ille qui furatur ut committat adulterium est, per se loquendo, magis adulter quam fur. (*S.* 1. 2. xviii. 6.)

Out of a dozen acts, therefore, which society would describe as *furta*, it is possible that not a single one would be thus defined by St. Thomas.

The consequences of this doctrine are far from easy. Might one not object, for instance, that theft, purely and solely for the sake of theft, is an impossible conception? But, if so, we should be forced to conclude that there is no such thing as *furtum*, relatively to the agent; nor would any other kind of offence withstand the same criticism. Worse than this, the distinction between good and evil is in danger of vanishing. For St. Thomas holds that all things are pursued *sub specie boni*, and if every man's ultimate *finis* is *bonum*, how can his *intentio* ever be towards what is evil? Such objections, though genuine, are not insurmountable. In the first place, we have to realize that the antithesis between *obiectum* and *finis* is valid only so long as we attempt to judge the same action by two different standards. As soon as we examine the act for the sole purpose of passing a moral judgement on the agent, we hear from St. Thomas that

actus dicuntur humani inquantum procedunt a voluntate deliberante: obiectum autem voluntatis est bonum et finis; et ideo manifestum est quod principium humanorum actuum, inquantum sunt humani, est finis, et similiter est terminus eorumdem. (*S.* 1. 2. 1. 3.)

The words *obiectum voluntatis est finis* remind us that the will can never act without some *finis* and that, consequently, all immediate and apparent *obiecta*, as being desired only for

the sake of the *finis*, are specified by that *finis*. Nor is this merely a re-statement of the difficulty. For we must call to mind another doctrine of St. Thomas, that the pursuit of the abstract ideal is impossible apart from the concrete representations of it which human life affords. We do not ask of the agent, What is your *ultimus finis*? but, Wherein do you hope to realize it? Every man desires and pursues his own happiness, but one supposes he will find it in money, another in carnal affections, a third in the practice of benevolence. Therefore, when a man shapes all his actions for the gratification of avarice or lust, he is to be judged, not by some more ultimate *finis*, but by that which he conceives to be a source of happiness, or, in other words, an end in itself. Thus the man who steals for the sake of adultery is an adulterer, and he who commits adultery for the sake of theft is a thief. The will, says St. Thomas, extends itself to both end and means, but:—

Ea vero quae sunt ad finem non sunt bona vel volita propter seipsa, sed ex ordine ad finem; unde voluntas in ea non fertur nisi quatenus fertur in finem; unde hoc ipsum quod in eis vult est finis. (*S.* 1. 2. viii. 2.)

The principle is absolutely simple, provided we never forget that the *finis* itself must be located in some concrete act or type of act, and that every type of act has an intrinsic goodness or badness which no individual will can change.

I have called the principle simple, but the simplicity is a little deceptive. The practical problem, at least, of classifying sinners according to the sins of which they are guilty is not solved by the mere reflection that the *finis* is always the criterion. For what is to be done with actions which are bad in themselves, because they transgress some ordinance of divine or human law, but good in so far as the agent intends them to minister to a good *finis*? A man may hold explicitly the doctrine that a good end justifies any and every means; or, without consciously professing that doctrine, he may do wrong things because he honestly believes them to be right; or, lastly, he may do things that he knows to be wrong, because he yields to the temptation of the moment. In none of these

cases is the nature of the *finis*, by which the act should be classified, plainly revealed. Upon the main point, indeed, St. Thomas again assists us, for he affirms emphatically that means as well as end must be good, and that no kind of sophistry can convert an evil act into a good one. Thus, when considering how far the merit of an act is to be judged *ex voluntate*, he decides that intention alone cannot make an act good :—

non autem bonitas voluntatis intendentis sufficit ad bonitatem actus ; quia actus potest esse de se malus, qui nullo modo bene fieri potest. Si autem consideretur voluntas secundum quod est eligens, sic universaliter verum est quod a bonitate voluntatis dicitur actus bonus, et a malitia malus. (*Sent.* ii, D. xl, q. i. 2.)

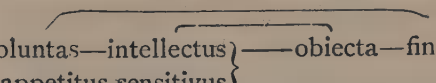
The technical difference between *intentio* and *electio* in this passage explains itself, and St. Thomas demands that both should be good. Nevertheless, we still might hesitate as to how we should define an act such as theft committed for the benefit of a charitable institution. Clearly the act may not rank as benevolence, but does it follow that it must always be *furtum*?

The answer to this question will be facilitated if we translate the whole problem into a slightly different form. In a chapter of the *Summa* from which I have often quoted, St. Thomas has occasion to make this statement :—

differentia specifica quae est ex fine est magis generalis ; et differentia quae est ex obiecto est specifica respectu eius. Voluntas enim, cuius proprium obiectum est finis, est universale motivum respectu omnium potentiarum animae, quorum propria obiecta sunt obiecta particularium actuum. (*S.* 1. 2. xviii. 7.)

Here St. Thomas shows that the whole argument concerning the relations of *finis* and *obiectum* can be converted into an argument about the control of the will over the other *potentiae* of the soul. As *finis* is to *obiectum*, so is *voluntas* to *intellectus* or *appetitus sensitivus*. The will controls the other *potentiae*, the *potentiae* control the mechanism of the body, the limbs perform an external act, and the external act is either a means

to some *finis*, or is taken as the *finis* itself. If we make a diagram thus:—



the curved lines will indicate the special connexion between *voluntas* and *finis* and, again, between the other *potentiae* and the *obiecta*; while the straight lines will signify, according as we begin at the left-hand end or at the right, that the inward act of will spreads through the rest of the soul to the external act, or that the moral quality of the *finis* is reflected in the intermediate *obiecta*, and so imparts its goodness or badness to the intellect, the senses, and the will. It makes no difference, in fact, whether you regard the *ratio moralitatis* as diffused outwards from the will or inwards from the *finis*. Apart from the consent and choice of will no act is morally significant, yet the act of will is good or bad according to the nature of its *finis*. And again, one may say, indifferently, that *obiecta* have no moral character but what they derive from the *ratio finis*, or that intellect and lower appetite are devoid of morality except as instruments of the will. Now there is a real advantage in introducing this second aspect of our problem, for there is more hope of classifying complicated acts in the right way if, instead of dwelling solely on the terms *obiectum* and *finis*, we realize that an act willed deliberately and for its own sake differs morally from an act in which the will is hindered by some defect of intellect or passion. The pure act of will wholly excludes passion and implies unclouded knowledge, but there are acts, genuinely moral in character, yet *circa passiones* or affected in some degree by *ignorantia*; and a right understanding of these will enable us to classify bad acts committed without the conscious adoption of a bad *finis*. Let us, then, examine some of the difficult cases already mentioned:—

(1) To believe that a good end can justify bad means to it is a kind of moral ignorance, and is, in the end, equivalent to ignorance of the precept forbidding the bad act. Now ignorance is sometimes an excuse and sometimes not; nor can we

proceed further without glancing at St. Thomas's opinions upon this matter. He teaches that there is, firstly, an ignorance that makes a wrong act wholly excusable. This may be either ignorance of some general principle which we are under no obligation to know, or ignorance of some special circumstance of which we had no chance of becoming aware. But, secondly, there is an inexcusable form of ignorance, consisting in ignorance of principles which every one can know if he please, and must know if he would act rightly. Distinguishing *ignorantia* from *nescientia*, St. Thomas says:—

ignorantia vero importat scientiae privationem, dum scilicet alicui deest scientia eorum quae natus est scire. Horum autem quaedam aliquis scire tenetur, illa scilicet sine quorum scientia non potest debitum actum recte exercere. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxvi. 2.)

And afterwards:—

ex quo patet quod nulla ignorantia invincibilis est peccatum; ignorantia autem vincibilis est peccatum, si sit eorum quae aliquis scire tenetur. (Ibid.)

As a general proposition, it is true that ignorance must tend to diminish sin:—

quia omne peccatum est voluntarium, intantum ignorantia potest diminuere peccatum inquantum diminuit voluntarium. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxvi. 4.)

But at the same time:—

contingit quandoque quod talis ignorantia directe et per se est voluntaria, sicut cum aliquis sua sponte nescit aliquid ut liberius peccet, et talis ignorantia videtur augere voluntarium et peccatum . . . quandoque vero ignorantia quae est causa peccati non est directe voluntaria sed indirecte vel per accidens; puta cum aliquis non vult laborare in studio, ex quo sequitur eum esse ignorantem . . . et talis ignorantia diminuit voluntarium. (Ibid.)

Now St. Thomas would certainly maintain that our hypothetical thief with the virtuous intentions is ignorant of a principle which it is his business to know. For certain rules of morality are dictated to every one by *naturalis ratio*, and if a man is ignorant of these, it must be through some defect in his will. I do not mean that natural reason reveals to

every one the precise principle that the end does *not* justify the means, but it does reveal to him that certain acts are wrong in themselves. Therefore, whoever steals and does not know that he is doing wrong must be said to sin through culpable ignorance.

But how is the act to be classified? St. Thomas has observed that the ignorance which causes sin is sometimes *directe voluntaria*, sometimes *indirecte vel per accidens*, and it is improbable that the moral character of the act will be the same in both cases. But, waiving this distinction for the moment, we must begin by grasping the fact that in sins of ignorance the *finis* by which the act is specified is not a principle which the agent has in view, but a principle which he *omits* to learn or remember. In other words, the act is classified by the *finis* which the agent ignores, and the *finis* by which he attempts to excuse the act is irrelevant. The concrete act is the minor premiss, and the right major premiss is a maxim prohibiting theft (or whatever sin it may be); but the agent, by a spurious piece of reasoning, tries to bring the act under another principle which, as he says, excuses or enjoins it. Sins of ignorance are thus sins of omission, and when St. Thomas is challenged to show that they are covered by St. Augustine's definition of sin as '*dictum, vel factum, vel concupitum contra legem Dei*', he replies that

> in hoc quod dicitur dictum vel factum vel concupitum sunt intelligendae etiam negationes oppositae, secundum quod omissio habet rationem peccati; et ita negligentia, secundum quam ignorantia est peccatum, continetur sub praedicta definitione peccati. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxvi. 2. ad 1.)

The word *negligentia*, however, is a warning that we must not forget the distinction between direct and indirect voluntariness; for, as a rule, St. Thomas reserves *negligentia* for the sins where ignorance is not perfectly deliberate. And so, when we have finally to decide upon the right definition of thefts committed through culpable ignorance, we must say (*a*) that if the agent wills to take his neighbour's property and is wilfully ignorant of the rule prohibiting theft, his act is *furtum*, and the ignorance is only an aggravating circum-

stance; (*b*) that if the agent was too indolent to inquire whether the act was right or wrong, but at the same time had no deliberate intention of injuring his neighbour, the sin must be classified as *negligentia*, for *negligentia* is then the *finis* by which the act is judged :—

quicumque negligit habere vel facere id quod tenetur habere vel facere, peccat peccato omissionis. Unde propter negligentiam ignorantia eorum quae aliquis scire tenetur est peccatum. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxvi. 2.)

These sins of *negligentia* are far easier to conceive than those in which a man is wantonly ignorant, *ut liberius peccet*, but there is no doubt that when the ignorance is wanton a man is to be held guilty of the *peccatum* which he actually commits.

(2) Previously, I distinguished from the man who believes that a good end justifies a bad means the sinner who, without professing that doctrine, takes a wrong road through failure to perceive its wrongness. But this distinction has now melted away. For when we have dismissed the false doctrine as an irrelevant sophism, there remains only one type of sinner, namely, the man who does a wrong act through ignorance that is directly or indirectly voluntary.

(3) But a really different case is that of an agent who assents to a right principle and knows, therefore, that a certain kind of act is wrong, yet gives way under the stress of passion and does the thing which, normally, his will rejects. Here the cause is not *ignorantia* but *passio*, or, as St. Thomas would commonly say, *infirmitas*. Even if *negligentia* be counted a passion, it is at most but one variety, and St. Thomas habitually treats sins of ignorance as distinct from sins of infirmity. For the latter sort the most general rule is that the act must be classified according to the passion which caused it ; or, more accurately, according to the *finis* which consisted in the gratification of some passion. How many species of passionate sins there may be is a question for another chapter. Here I have only undertaken to show that the act of the individual sinner is in all cases classified by the *finis* of his will, and never by the visible *obiectum*, save in so

far as the *obiectum* and the *finis* are one. Difficult as it may be sometimes, and especially with the sins caused by ignorance, to discern the real *finis*, there can, I think, be no manner of doubt that St. Thomas never abandons his principle.

The method of classifying sinners being thus roughly determined, we can turn to the classification of sins. In the more exact terminology of St. Thomas, *vitium* denotes a bad habit and *peccatum* is the name for a bad act, so that any number of *peccata* may be examples of the same *vitium*. But, as a rule, the two terms are used somewhat indiscriminately, and it will be convenient to keep for the most part to *peccatum*. Now every *peccatum* is an *actus ordinatus* and contains two elements:—

> ad rationem peccati duo concurrunt, scilicet actus voluntarius, et inordinatio eius, quae est per recessum a lege Dei. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxii. 1.)

Are the species of *peccata*, then, relative to the *inordinatio* or to the peculiar character of the act? There is, in fact, a slight danger of error here; for if moral guilt is derived from *voluntas*, but the *peccatum*, as such, from the violation of some *ordo*, one might infer that the notion of guilt was conveyed in the words *actus voluntarius*, but the particular quality of the act in the word *inordinatio*. Yet St. Thomas means exactly the converse of this, as may be seen from the words immediately following those already quoted:—

> horum autem duorum unum per se comparatur ad peccantem, qui intendit talem actum voluntarium exercere in tali materia; aliud autem, scilicet inordinatio actus, per accidens se habet ad intentionem peccantis. 'Nullus enim intendens ad malum operatur', ut Dionysius dicit. Manifestum est autem quod unumquodque consequitur speciem secundum illud quod est per se, non autem secundum id quod est per accidens . . . et ideo peccata specie distinguuntur ex parte actuum voluntariorum magis quam ex parte inordinationis in peccato existentis. (Ibid.)

The maxim of Dionysius means that the ultimate *intentio* of a man cannot be towards evil; but the proximate end may be evil in itself and yet may be deliberately willed.

Now it is this proximate end (i. e. the *obiectum*) which specifies the sin. In willing the act of homicide, for instance, a man wills an act which is *inordinatus* relatively to the social *ordo*, and the act is classified by that standard. He does not will the *inordinatio* for its own sake, nor take *malum* as an end in itself. If, then, we would divide *peccata* into species, we cannot do so by attending to the bare fact of *inordinatio* which is common (though not in the same degree) to all *peccata*. The same doctrine is often conveyed by St. Thomas in the terms *aversio* and *conversio*:—

in peccato autem duo sunt, quorum unum est aversio ab incommutabili bono . . . aliud quod est in peccato est inordinata conversio ad commutabile bonum. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxxvii. 4.)

Aversio here expresses the same point as the previous *inordinatio*, but is, perhaps, even more effective in declaring the negative character of evil. The sheer fact of *aversio* provides no basis for the specification of sins, but the *conversio* towards some positive object, which is conceived to be *bonum*, makes the act concrete, and we can foresee that the classification of the act will be relative to the nature of the *bonum*:—

malum inquantum huiusmodi, privatio est; et ideo diversificatur specie secundum ea quae privantur, sicut et ceterae privationes. Sed peccatum non sortitur speciem ex parte privationis vel aversionis, sed ex conversione ad obiectum actus. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 9. ad 1.)

The distinction between *peccatum* and *culpa* is here exhibited very clearly; for afterwards, when St. Thomas is comparing spiritual and carnal sins, he says:—

peccata carnalia consummantur in delectatione carnalis appetitus, ad quem principaliter pertinet ad bonum corporale converti; et ideo peccatum carnale, inquantum huiusmodi, plus habet de conversione . . . sed peccatum spirituale inquantum huiusmodi, est maioris culpae. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 5.)

Thus on the one side are *conversio* and the species of *peccata*, on the other *aversio* and the fact or degree of guilt. On the same principle St. Thomas remarks in the *De Malo* (ii. 2) that sin is not *deformitas* but *actus deformis*: the *deformitas* in itself expresses the discordance between sin and the divine

law, but every sin is an act with a positive character of its own.

We cannot fail to perceive that through all these variations of language St. Thomas is only reiterating a familiar principle of classification, which becomes once more explicit in the words, *peccata distinguuntur specie secundum obiecta* (*S.* 1. 2. lxxii. 1). And since our present purpose is to enumerate the species of sin without reference to the guilt of individuals in particular cases, we must understand *obiecta* in its most material sense. The mere word, as we know, can be ambiguous:—

> obiecta, secundum quod comparantur ad actus exteriores habent rationem materiae circa quam, sed secundum quod comparantur ad actum interiorem voluntatis, habent rationem finium. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxii. 3. ad 2.)

But, evidently, our business now lies with the *materia circa quam*, and if we can succeed in analysing the total *materia* into all the different *obiecta* which can possibly be occasions of sin, we shall then be furnished with a list of vices, to correspond with the list of virtues formulated already.

Perhaps, however, I may insert here a few words in explanation of the fact that I do not attempt to make a more immediate transition from virtues to vices. St. Thomas himself, in the *Secunda Secundae*, has placed with each virtue the *vitia opposita*, and some such arrangement seems to follow from the very notion of virtue and vice. Yet by merely contemplating the parallelism or antithesis of good and evil *habitus* we should miss many of the more important facts in the teaching of St. Thomas. For the truth is that the whole conception of Sin had been so much enlarged and deepened by the influence of Christianity that the moral philosophy of even the wisest Pagans was made to appear inadequate. Aristotle and other philosophers had their lists of virtues and, consequently, lists of vices. Here and there, too, you might come upon some general theory of evil, such as the Stoic tenet that all sins are of equal gravity. But the fact of sin had not weighed upon the ancient world as a mystery; the great masters of speculation had produced but little in the way of a special philosophy of evil, nor had they offered

to trace the misdeeds of men to their sources in the way implied by Christian maxims such as *initium omnis mali superbia* or *radix omnium peccatorum cupiditas*. There was, in fact, an abundance of doctrines, traditions, and aphorisms about the nature of sin, none of which had been bequeathed by Pagan moralists, and all of which St. Thomas was bound to treat with respect. I do not suggest that (apart from pure theology) St. Thomas detected a want of harmony between Pagan and Christian teachers on the subject of moral evil, but it is clear that a method more devious than in the case of the virtues was necessary before a tradition like that of the seven capital vices could be brought into touch with Cicero or Aristotle. Meanwhile, we can rest assured that in proposing to distinguish sins by their *obiecta* St. Thomas is not forgetting the relation of vices to virtues. For he says himself of the species of sin that

> etiamsi distinguantur secundum oppositas virtutes, in idem rediret: virtutes enim distinguuntur specie secundum obiecta. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxii. 1. ad 2.)

The same *obiecta*, he means, will give both a classification of virtues and a classification of vices, but in starting directly from the *obiecta* there are advantages which will presently appear.

The actual process of St. Thomas consists in examining a number of suggestions as to the specification of *peccata* and in showing that in each of these, if valid, the principle of classifying by the *obiecta* is illustrated:—

(1) Sins may be distinguished as *in Deum*, *in se*, and *in proximum*. Man is subject to a threefold *ordo*: the *ordo divinae legis*, which is in all things the ultimate standard; the *ordo rationis*, which ought to regulate both inward passion and outward action; and the *ordo ad proximum*, to which all our dealings with other men ought to conform. Of these three the *ordo Dei* contains and exceeds the *ordo rationis*, for certain regulations in the divine order are beyond the scope of reason: and, similarly, the *ordo rationis* contains but exceeds the *ordo ad proximum*, for there are some duties to ourselves which involve no immediate relation to others. The

three types of sin are, therefore, distinguishable, and, as examples, we are told that the heretic and the blasphemer sin primarily against God, the glutton and the prodigal against self, the murderer and the thief against other men. St. Thomas then points to the central principle:—

sunt autem diversa quibus homo ordinatur ad Deum, ad proximum, et ad seipsum. Unde haec distinctio peccatorum est secundum obiecta, secundum quae diversificantur species peccatorum. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxii. 4.)

Nor is the reference to corresponding virtues omitted:—

manifestum est enim ex dictis quod virtutibus theologicis homo ordinatur ad Deum, temperantia vero et fortitudine ad seipsum; iustitia autem ad proximum. (Ibid.)

(2) The division of sins into *carnalia* and *spiritualia* is connected by St. Thomas with a remark of St. Gregory's about the capital vices, but there is no need to diverge here into that topic. All sin, says St. Thomas, consists in an inordinate appetite for some *bonum commutabile*, but there are two kinds of *bona*, answering to the two kinds of *delectatio*, one *spiritualis* or *animalis*, the other *carnalis* or *corporalis* (*S.* 1. 2. lxxii. 2). This twofold *delectatio* has been encountered already (chap. vii, p. 135), and a slight dispute about the position of *avaritia* (ibid. ad 4) reminds us that *bona exteriora* are sometimes recognized as well as *bona animae* and *bona corporis*. I ought, perhaps, to add that 'spiritual' sins are not spiritual in a sense that contrasts them with moral sins. St. Thomas means that the appetite for wealth and honours is unknown to *bruta animalia*, but the limits of the *appetitus inferior* are not transcended, and spiritual sins must not be directly contrasted with theological virtues.

(3) *Utrum peccata distinguantur specie secundum causas* is the next question, and we stumble at once upon the fourfold sense of cause. St. Thomas, however, attends but little to two of the senses; for sin is defective action or process, and to this the 'efficient' and 'final' senses are most appropriate. Now the efficient causes of sin are the passions, and St. Thomas argues that it is impossible to deduce the species of sin from the passions, inasmuch as the same passion may produce a

great variety of sins, or again, the same sin may spring from more than one sort of passion. He thus decides

quod peccata non differant specie secundum diversas causas activas vel motivas, sed solum secundum diversitatem causae finalis, quia finis est obiectum voluntatis. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxii. 3.)

I must confess that the concluding words of this statement threaten us with that very ambiguity which we are most anxious to avoid. For as soon as *obiecta* begin to be regarded as *fines*, the interest shifts from the generic to the individual aspect of sins. But, on the whole, it is a fair interpretation of St. Thomas to say that all kinds of *obiecta* are capable of becoming *fines*, and that sins can, in consequence, be specified by their final cause. No addition to our knowledge of possible *obiecta* is made in this way, but in another chapter the importance of regarding certain *obiecta* as final causes will be explained.

(4) St. Thomas pays respect to Aristotle's famous doctrine of the mean by allowing that *superabundantia* and *defectus* diversify the species of sin. He lays down the axiom:—

ubicumque occurrit diversum motivum inclinans intentionem ad peccandum, ibi est diversa species peccati,

and infers immediately

quod non est idem motivum ad peccandum in peccatis quae sunt secundum superabundantiam et in peccatis quae sunt secundum defectum: quinimmo sunt contraria motiva. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxii. 8.)

There can be no question that the *motivum* is to be identified with the *obiectum*.

(5) The same maxim concerning motives settles the claim of *circumstantiae* to differentiate sinful actions. Circumstances do not necessarily change the character of the *obiectum*. A miser, for instance, may acquire money *quando non oportet* or *ubi non oportet* or *plus quam oportet*, but his sin will in any case be *illiberalitas*. On the other hand, to rob a church might well be called *furtum*, but the special circumstances introduce a mark of differentiation, and *sacrilegium* will be a more accurate name. So, if one man eats

too quickly, another too daintily, and a third too much, it does not follow that all three are *gulosi*, for their motives and objects may differ.

In these successive attempts to arrive at the species of *peccata* St. Thomas appears to be guided quite as much by the desire to include prevailing traditions as by systematic reference to any single *fundamentum divisionis*. That specific differences are always relative to different *obiecta* he is never tired of repeating, but that the *obiecta* themselves fall naturally into a certain arrangement will probably become clearer as the argument of later chapters is developed. Here I shall offer no further commentary, but will conclude by noticing one or two suggestions as to the species of sin which St. Thomas refuses to entertain. First of all, there is the difference between a sin of commission and a sin of omission, a difference which, according to St. Thomas, is not properly specific. Superficially a positive and a negative act must differ, as, for instance, the rapacious grasping of money differs from the mere refusal to give for a good object; but in such cases the two acts *ad idem ordinantur et ex eodem motivo procedunt* (*S.* 1. 2. lxxii. 6), and their species must be reckoned the same. As a general expression of his meaning St. Thomas supplies the aphorism :—

> semper enim in rebus negatio fundatur super aliqua affirmatione, quae est quodammodo causa eius. (Ibid.)

Another and more important point is connected with the division of sins *secundum reatum poenae*. On merely logical grounds St. Thomas argues that the *poena*, like the fact of *inordinatio*, is *praeter intentionem peccantis*, and therefore *per accidens* in relation to the species of the act. But the interest of his argument lies in the reference to mortal and venial sins. Mortal sins entail eternal punishment, and venial sins do not, but that a difference of species is thus constituted St. Thomas denies on the ground that

> differentia peccati venialis et mortalis consequitur diversitatem inordinationis quae complet rationem peccati. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxii. 5.)

The *inordinatio* involved in a sinful act may amount to renunciation of the *ultimus finis*, but there is also a lesser *inordinatio*, which affects only the means to the end :—

quando anima deordinatur per peccatum usque ad aversionem ab ultimo fine, scilicet Deo, cui unitur per caritatem, tunc est peccatum mortale : quando vero fit deordinatio citra aversionem a Deo, tunc est peccatum veniale. (Ibid.)

Now we know that a difference in the mere degree of *inordinatio* is not a specific difference, and there is nothing surprising in the statement :—

nihil prohibet in eadem specie inveniri aliquod peccatum mortale et veniale, sicut primus motus in genere adulterii est peccatum veniale ; et verbum otiosum, quod plerumque est veniale, potest etiam esse mortale. (Ibid. ad 1.)

But the difficulty is that St. Thomas does not allow us to draw the apparently logical inference, that no *peccatum*, as such, is either necessarily mortal or necessarily venial. On the contrary, he first speaks rather ambiguously, as when he writes that

differentia quae est ex reatu poenae potest consequi diversam speciem peccatorum, non autem constituit diversitatem speciei. (Ibid.)

And afterwards, in reply to the objection that some sins are *mortalia ex genere*, he says :—

ex hoc quod invenitur aliquod peccatum mortale ex genere et aliquod peccatum veniale ex genere sequitur quod talis differentia consequatur diversitatem peccatorum secundum speciem, non autem quod causet eam. (Ibid. ad 2.)

Now this is a plain admission that some sins are generically mortal, and we may, at first, be puzzled by an argument which has to harmonize the following propositions :—

(*a*) *inordinatio* does not differentiate the species of sin.

(*b*) *inordinatio*, as being expressed in the agent's will, does differentiate mortal and venial sins.

(*c*) Some sins are *mortalia ex genere*.

No logical fallacy is inherent in the reasoning of St. Thomas, but the conception of *peccata mortalia ex genere*, by which alone a fallacy can be avoided, is by no means free

from difficulty. For since the mortality of sin depends on the state of the agent's will, St. Thomas must intend to teach that certain *peccata* cannot possibly be committed except when the inward condition of the agent is of a certain character. This need not (and, indeed, cannot) mean that there are some *actus exteriores* which in themselves involve damnation, regardless of the agent's intention; but it does mean that there are some *peccata* which a man cannot *will* to perform without proving that he has renounced the *ultimus finis* and made himself worthy of damnation. Here, then, the almost inevitable ambiguity of the term *peccatum* is revealed again, for try as we may to remember that a *peccatum* is an *actus* which breaks some positive law, and that the question of *culpa* is perfectly distinct, yet we have from St. Thomas himself a warning that to attribute a given *peccatum* to any man must commonly mean not merely that the man has committed a certain sort of *actus inordinatus* but that he was also guilty of taking the act for his *finis*, or as a means thereto. In other words, we suspect that a correspondence between certain outward acts and certain inward states of will must, as a rule, be assumed; so that, if we say, for instance, that a man has committed theft, we ought to mean not only that he has taken another's property (for this he might do by accident), but that he deliberately willed the act or, at least, did it under the influence of passion. How far language will enable St. Thomas to intimate by the very names of *peccata* the degrees of guilt implied in willing them I must not now conjecture, but it was impossible to notice such an expression as *mortalia ex genere* without some anticipation of a future problem. Yet there is not any reason, however complex that problem may afterwards appear, to withdraw the main thesis of this chapter, namely, that the classifying of sinners according to their *finis* is a totally different matter from the classification of sins *secundum obiecta*.

CHAPTER XI

THE COMPARATIVE GRAVITY OF SINS

THE dissertation upon the various ways of specifying sins is followed at once by a chapter entitled *De Comparatione Peccatorum ad Invicem*. In many ways the latter *quaestio* is modelled on the former, but St. Thomas has first of all to refute two opinions, either of which, if adopted, must have brought to a premature conclusion the comparison of different sins in respect of their gravity. St. James had said, *quicumque totam legem servaverit, offendat autem in uno, factus est omnium reus* (ii. 16); and it is a not unnatural interpretation of these words that all sins are connected together, a doctrine which seems to derive further support from the acknowledged unity of the virtues. For whether we recall the Aristotelian view of *prudentia*, or think of the higher bond of *caritas*, we perceive the virtues to be knit together so closely that we may not, when speaking philosophically, credit with the possession of one of them a man who is notoriously lacking in another. Yet a similar connexion among the vices is denied by St. Thomas, who points out a defect in the proposed analogy, and then translates the saying of St. James into technical language which discloses its real meaning. First we are told that

> cuiuslibet agentis secundum virtutem intentio est ut ipsius rationis regulam sequatur; et ideo omnium virtutum intentio in idem tendit; et propter hoc omnes virtutes habent connexionem ad invicem in ratione recta agibilium, quae est prudentia. Sed intentio peccantis non est ad hoc quod recedat ab eo quod est secundum rationem, sed potius quod tendat in aliquod bonum appetibile, a quo speciem sortitur. Huiusmodi autem bona . . . sunt diversa, nullam connexionem habentia ad invicem. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 1.)

There is an identity of principle in all good actions, no matter how great the diversity of *materia*, but in the eyes

of one who believes it impossible for *malum inquantum huiusmodi* to be the goal of any man's intention, there is no such identity in diverse sinful actions, for all *peccatum* consists, as St. Thomas says, *in recedendo ab unitate ad multitudinem*. The *intentio agentis*, therefore, provides no inner bond among *peccata*, and if, again, there is no unity pervading the *bona* from which sins derive their species, the opinion that all sins are connected must be false.

St. Thomas, however, is not yet satisfied. To meet the objection that a single act of mortal sin destroys all virtues simultaneously, he distinguishes between 'infused' and 'acquired' virtue, and says:—

peccatum mortale tollit virtutem infusam inquantum avertit a Deo; sed unus actus peccati etiam mortalis non tollit habitum virtutis acquisitae. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 1. ad 2.)

All infused virtue flows from the inspiration of the spirit of Charity, and the very nature of *peccatum mortale* is to drive away that spirit: but an acquired virtue is a habit built up by a series of similar actions and not to be expelled but by the formation of a contrary habit. It is true that the loss of *prudentia*, resulting from the destruction of any one acquired virtue, affects the *perfectum et formale esse* of all the others and reduces them to the status of *inclinationes ad actus virtutum*; but even the survival of the good inclinations proves that the contrary vices have not been acquired, and St. Thomas is steadfast in refusing to allow that one vice carries all the others along with it. How, then, can the statement of St. James be defended? Mortal sin, replies St. Thomas, *avertit a Deo*, and

Iacobus loquitur de peccato non ex parte conversionis, secundum quod peccata distinguuntur; sed loquitur de eis ex parte aversionis, inquantum scilicet homo recedit a legis mandato. Omnia autem legis mandata sunt ab uno et eodem, ut ipse ibidem dicit, et ideo idem Deus contemnitur in omni peccato. (Ibid. ad 1.)

The common element in all sins is only a negation, the fact of *aversio*, whereas their individuality depends upon the element of *conversio* to various *bona*. How far St. Thomas

really makes out a difference between virtues and vices might be questioned, but it is clear from the next article of the same *quaestio* that his reason for denying the inter-connexion of all vices is the fear that he might also be asked to admit their equality.

The Stoic paradox that all sins are equal in gravity was known to St. Thomas through Cicero and other writers, and Cicero himself was supposed to have asserted the equality of all virtues. St. Thomas corrects that interpretation of Cicero, but adds the words :—

> et tamen si virtutes essent pares, non sequeretur vitia esse paria ; quia virtutes habent connexionem, non autem peccata seu vitia. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 2. ad 3.)

The error of the Stoics, however, was not simply an inference from a belief that all vices were connected. Like those who had misinterpreted St. James, they were too much pre-occupied with the negative side of sin, but their fault lay chiefly in a wrong estimate of *privatio* :—

> Stoici ducebantur ex hoc quod considerabant peccatum ex parte privationis tantum, prout scilicet est recessus a ratione ; unde simpliciter aestimantes quod nulla privatio susciperet magis et minus, posuerunt omnia peccata esse paria. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 2.)

They failed to understand, says St. Thomas, that there are two sorts of *privatio*, one of which admits of variation in degree. Death is the privation of life, and a man, once dead, does not become any more so because you stick a dozen or two of swords into his person. But another kind of *privatio* is typified by disease, and here there is room for *magis et minus*. All bodily disease disturbs the proper *commensuratio* of humours, but not always to the same degree. The case is the same with vices : —

> Sic enim in eis privatur debita commensuratio rationis, ut non totaliter ordo rationis tollatur ; alioquin malum, si sit integrum, destruit seipsum, ut dicitur . . . et ideo multum interest ad gravitatem peccati utrum plus vel minus recedat a rectitudine rationis. (Ibid.)

Now here the degree of *gravitas* is unquestionably made proportionate to the *aversio*, *inordinatio*, or whatever term we employ for the negative element of sin ; and for a moment the position of St. Thomas seems obscure. For he appears to criticize the Stoics for attending too much to *aversio*, and yet, by admitting that *gravitas* is relative to the degree of *aversio*, he suggests that the *conversio*, or positive side of sin, is irrelevant. But although, with regard to the specification of sins, the positive and negative elements were rather sharply contrasted, such contrast does not exist in the matter of *gravitas* : indeed, the primary reason for variation in *gravitas* is that sins differ *secundum obiecta*.

The proof that sins vary in heinousness according to their specific character opens with a reminder of the analogy between sin and disease. The heart is the *principium vitae*, and disease, therefore, increases in gravity as it approaches towards disturbing the heart's proper action. Similarly :—

Oportet etiam quod peccatum sit tanto gravius quanto deordinatio contingit circa aliquod principium quod est prius in ordine rationis. Ratio autem ordinat omnia in agibilibus ex fine ; et ideo, quanto peccatum in actibus humanis ex altiori fine, tanto peccatum est gravius. Obiecta autem actuum sunt fines eorum, et ideo secundum diversitatem obiectorum attenditur diversitas gravitatis in peccatis. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 3.)

St. Thomas then sketches a kind of hierarchy of *obiecta* :—

res exteriores ordinantur ad hominem sicut ad finem, homo autem ordinatur ulterius in Deum sicut in finem. (Ibid.)

It follows that to take a man's life is a worse sin than to take his goods, while graver than either is a sin immediately *contra Deum*, such as infidelity or blasphemy. And lest there should be any misunderstanding St. Thomas ends by saying :—

et quia peccata habent speciem ex obiectis, differentia gravitatis quae attenditur penes obiecta est prima et principalis, quasi consequens speciem. (Ibid.)

Clearly, then, St. Thomas saw no difficulty in holding simultaneously, (*a*) that a certain degree of *gravitas* means a certain degree of *aversio*, (*b*) that the *gravitas* is measured

primarily by the specific differences among *peccata*, those differences being derived from the *obiecta* towards which the will of the sinner is 'converted'. For every species of inordinate *conversio* must involve a certain degree of *aversio* from the true *finis*, and when St. Thomas has constructed the objection—

peccatum non habet rationem malitiae ex parte conversionis ad proprium obiectum, quod est quoddam bonum appetibile, sed magis ex parte aversionis,

he gives the sufficient answer:—

Ex ipsa indebita conversione ad aliquod bonum commutabile sequitur aversio ab incommutabili bono, in qua perficitur ratio mali. Et ideo oportet quod secundum diversitatem eorum quae pertinent ad conversionem sequatur diversa gravitas malitiae in peccatis. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 3. ad 2.)

An act is a sin when it violates a given *lex* or *ordo*. Every such violation is of some specific kind, and each kind carries a certain degree of *aversio* with it. You may call this *aversio* inherent in the act, or you may say that the agent who wills such an act expresses the *aversio* in his own will, and that his guilt is proportionate to the degree of *aversio*. If, on the other hand, the agent commits an act which, regarded from outside, is homicide or theft or adultery, but does not will the act for its own sake, then he does not take upon himself the *aversio* generically belonging to the act, but is either guiltless or guilty of some other sin which was his true *finis*. He who wills to murder another testifies to a greater inward *aversio* than if he had only willed to rob him; and thus there is no objection, even from the most inward point of view, to saying that sins vary in gravity *secundum obiecta*. But the difference between the earthly and the heavenly judge is that the former searches only for the *obiectum*, while the latter (we presume) will inquire whether the *obiectum* was also the *finis*. Morally speaking, a man commits only the act in which his intention rests, but, so long as that fact is remembered, we may safely say that there is more inherent *gravitas* in some *peccata* than in others.

Another reference to mortal and venial sins will be a useful illustration of St. Thomas's meaning. Sins like blasphemy and

homicide he calls *mortalia ex genere,* because the will of any man who intends such acts *fertur in aliquid quod secundum se repugnat caritati.* Other acts, such as idle words or laughter, may be called *venialia ex genere.* But then, lest we should be troubled by the thought that *culpa* resides in the will alone, St. Thomas adds:—

sed quia actus morales respiciunt rationem boni et mali non solum ex obiecto sed etiam ex aliqua dispositione agentis, contingit quandoque quod id quod est peccatum veniale ex genere, ratione sui obiecti, fit mortale ex parte agentis, vel quia in eo constituit finem ultimum, vel quia ordinat ipsum ad aliquid quod est peccatum mortale ex genere. Similiter etiam ex parte agentis contingit quod aliquod peccatum, quod ex suo genere est mortale, fit veniale, propter hoc scilicet quod actus est imperfectus, id est, non deliberatus ratione, quae est principium proprium mali actus. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxxviii. 2.)

This passage exhibits with singular clearness the difficulty of indicating by the bare names of *peccata* their mortal or venial character; for a difference *ex parte agentis* seems liable to transfer any act from one genus to the other. To a great extent it is a question of terminology; and no language, not even the technical language of law or philosophy, can be expected to provide as many names for the same external act as there are shades of variation in the dispositions of human agents. Yet consider a word like the English 'murder'. As commonly used, this word signifies more than the fact of manslaughter, and no one would apply it except with the assumption that the act was *deliberatus ratione*, or, in other words, that the *obiectum* was also the *finis*. If, therefore, one were to call murder a sin generically mortal, there would be no confusion, for the implication of *culpa* is conveyed by the word itself, and there is no danger of forgetting that sin must be mortal *ex parte agentis* as well as *secundum obiectum.* What St. Thomas requires, therefore (if it were possible), is a philosophical language in which the names of *peccata*, while expressing the specific character and *materia* of each sin, will also connote a definite kind of *dispositio* in the agent, so that there can be no question of a discrepancy between inward and outward *gravitas.* I need hardly add that not even St. Thomas

could always succeed in avoiding verbal confusion: but of mental confusion there is no trace in his writings. He never calls any sin *mortale ex genere* without remembering that its mortal quality must be expressed in the *aversio* of the agent's will from God as well as in the constant relation of the bare *peccatum* to the divine or human *ordo*. Murder and many other sins are generically mortal, but no man is to be counted a murderer until we know that he deliberately plotted his neighbour's death. We can, therefore, examine St. Thomas's successive ways of measuring the *gravitas* of sins with the understanding that the degree of badness may be fixed, without change of principle, either by the *obiectum* of the act or *ex parte subiecti*.

(1) First, then, we learn that sin may be aggravated, *secundum conditionem personae in quam peccatur*. Here St. Thomas revives the distinctions, *in Deum*, *in se*, and *in proximum*, but his treatment of the subject is not quite the same as in the previous chapter, for in one passage the phrases *ex parte Dei*, *ex parte sui ipsius*, and *ex parte proximi* denote three ways of looking at sin rather than three classes of sins. For example, if we judge *ex parte Dei*, we observe that one man may, by his office, stand nearer to God than another, so that an injury done to him *magis redundat in Deum*. Or again, if we judge *ex parte sui ipsius*:—

tanto aliquis gravius peccat quanto aliquis magis in coniunctam personam seu naturali necessitudine, seu beneficiis, seu quacumque coniunctione, peccaverit; quia videtur in seipsum magis peccare, et pro tanto gravius peccat. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 9.)

And lastly, *ex parte proximi*, an injury is aggravated in proportion to its effect upon society: hence the enormity of sins against a king or any *persona publica*. These examples are intelligible enough, but when St. Thomas refers to sins against God, self, and other men, as to three distinct classes, there is just a possibility of error. That sins *in Deum* are the gravest is certain, but as between the other two classes the case is not clear. St. Thomas says:—

dicendum quod nocumentum quod quis sibi ipsi infert in

his quae subsunt dominio propriae voluntatis, sicut in rebus possessis, habent minus de peccato quam si alteri inferatur, quia propria voluntate hoc agit; sed in his quae non subduntur dominio voluntatis, sicut sunt naturalia et spiritualia bona, est gravius peccatum nocumentum sibi ipsi inferre; gravius enim peccat qui occidit seipsum quam qui occidit alterum. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 9. ad 2.)

I shall not discuss here the peculiar case of suicide, but the general explanation of this statement is that the comparison of self and others is always complicated by the difference between moral and theological standards. In the *ordo caritatis* (cf. *S.* 2. 2. xxvi. 4) self stands above other men because no man may sacrifice his immortal welfare for the benefit of another; but when the terms *peccata in se* and *peccata in proximum* bear the sense proper to them in moral philosophy, the latter are, without question, the graver. For *peccata in se* are sins against Courage or Temperance, but *peccata in proximum* are sins against Justice; and we shall learn from St. Thomas, almost immediately, that, because Justice is the greatest of moral virtues, Injustice is the greatest of moral sins.

(2) How far does an increase of *nocumentum* augment the gravity of sin? Magnitude of *nocumentum* alone does not prove the seriousness of sin, for the greatest of all sins are *peccata in Deum*, and God cannot, in a direct sense, suffer any *nocumentum* at all. Granting, however, that some sins do involve *nocumentum*, the question is whether an increase in the damage inflicted then increases the guilt. St. Thomas replies, firstly, that if the amount of damage be neither *praevisum* nor *intentum*, the augmentation makes no difference: secondly, that if it be *praevisum* but not *intentum*, there is an aggravation of sinfulness but not in the most obvious way. If, for instance, a man seeks a short cut to the object of his passions, and so tramples on his neighbour's oats, he proves thereby the intensity of his evil passion, but the damage to his neighbour was not in itself intended, and of that particular *iniuria* he is not guilty. But, thirdly, when the extent of the damage is both *praevisum* and *intentum*:—

directe quantitas nocumenti adauget gravitatem peccati,

quia tunc nocumentum est per se obiectum peccati. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 8).

(3) The effect of *circumstantiae* on the gravity of sins is the next point, and the principle that *debitae circumstantiae* ought to be observed in every act is illustrated most clearly when

circumstantia transfert in aliud genus peccati; sicut peccatum fornicationis consistit in hoc quod homo accedit ad non suam; si autem addatur haec circumstantia ut illa ad quam accedit sit alterius uxor, transfertur iam in aliud genus peccati, scilicet in iniustitiam, inquantum homo usurpat rem alterius; et secundum hoc adulterium est gravius peccatum quam fornicatio. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 7.)

The principle exemplified here, no less clearly than with regard to *nocumentum* or the *persona in quam*, is that the gravity of sin varies *secundum obiecta.*

(4) The debate upon the question, *utrum gravitas peccatorum differat secundum dignitatem virtutum quibus opponuntur*, gives us a deeper insight into the philosophy of St. Thomas. A sin is contrasted with a certain virtue:—

quod scilicet est circa idem obiectum; nam contraria circa idem sunt: et hoc modo oportet quod maiori virtuti opponatur maius peccatum; utrumque enim ex obiecto speciem sortitur. Unde oportet quod maximae virtuti directe contrarietur maximum peccatum, quasi maxime ab eodem distans in eodem genere. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 4.)

So far, it is the *obiecta* alone which form the medium of contrast, but when we seek for a determinate order of superiority among the moral virtues, we shall find that the readiest means of comparison is provided by the *subiecta* in which the virtues inhere. The general pre-eminence of theological virtues over moral needs no further proof, but the comparison between members of the same order, as when Faith competes with Charity, or Justice with Courage, is more complicated, and it is unsafe to expect a precise analogy between the higher and the lower sort of virtue. As to the theological virtues, I doubt whether the relative positions of *fides* and *spes* can be fixed with certainty. In that *quaestio*, at least, to which I shall now confine myself, St. Thomas says nothing very definite about those two virtues, but enlarges upon the thesis of St. Paul, that

Charity is greater than either. The *obiectum* of all three virtues is God Himself, and thus far all are equal, but, whereas Faith is *de non visis* and Hope *de non habitis*, Charity is *de eo quod iam habetur, est enim amatum quodammodo in amante* (*S.* 1. 2. lxvi. 6.) But here a critic is supposed to object that Faith must be the greatest because it is *in intellectu*, and because the relation of Faith to Hope and Charity should be analogous to that of Prudence to the moral virtues. St. Thomas repels the analogy and differentiates theological and moral virtues on account of a difference in their *obiecta*. Moral virtues deal with things *infra hominem*, and here knowledge or prudence is the highest virtue, but:—

in his quae sunt supra hominem nobilior est dilectio quam cognitio: perficitur enim cognitio secundum quod cognita sunt in cognoscente; dilectio vero secundum quod diligens trahitur ad rem dilectam. (Ibid. ad 1.)

The superiority of *dilectio* to *cognitio* in the highest matters is a doctrine which I must not stay to criticize: it is enough that St. Thomas thus asserts that *caritas* is greater than *fides* and, consequently, that *infidelitas* is a sin less grave than sins directly opposed to *caritas*.

With regard to the moral virtues, St. Thomas starts from the axiom, *causa et radix humani boni est ratio*, and proceeds to rate the cardinal virtues according to their proximity to reason:—

prudentia, quae perficit rationem, praefertur in bonitate aliis virtutibus moralibus, perficientibus vim appetitivam, inquantum participat rationem; et in his etiam tanto est una altera maior quanto magis ad rationem accedit; unde et iustitia, quae est in voluntate, praefertur aliis virtutibus moralibus; et fortitudo, quae est in irascibili, praefertur temperantiae, quae est in concupiscibili, quae minus participat rationem. (*S.* 1. 2. lxvi. 1.)

The status of the virtues is here referred simply to their *subiecta*: the rational is above the sensual, and the higher mode of sensual appetite above the lower. Of the superiority of Justice, St. Thomas also writes:—

iustitia inter omnes virtutes morales praecellit, tanquam propinquior rationi. Quod patet et ex subiecto et ex obiecto:

ex subiecto quidem quia est in voluntate sicut in subiecto; voluntas autem est appetitus rationalis: secundum autem obiectum sive materiam, quia est circa operationes quibus homo ordinatur non solum in seipso sed etiam ad alterum. (*S.* 1. 2. lxvi. 4.)

It will be observed that St. Thomas does not go beyond the four cardinal virtues (or three, if we remember that *prudentia* is not purely moral), and for the present we may imitate him in refraining from the more difficult task of reducing to exact order all the minor virtues named by Aristotle or Cicero. The one thing of supreme importance is to grasp the principle that the gravity of sins increases as we mount from the lower to the higher parts of human nature. Whoever would understand St. Thomas or Dante must for ever dismiss the popular notion that the most reprehensible forms of sin are those in which man most nearly resembles the beasts of the field. Persons who hold up their hands in horror at offences which society calls carnal or brutal or bestial, but excuse the more refined forms of iniquity, on the ground that they belong to the higher parts of human nature, are simply Gnostics or Manichaeans in disguise. They believe that evil is a separate nature or principle, manifesting itself chiefly in animals lower than man, and nothing but want of logic prevents them from preaching the doctrine that sins of the flesh cannot stain the spirit. St. Thomas, on the other hand, like all good Christians, believes that the apex and crown of wickedness must be sought in the vicinity of the angels. The vices most animal in character are the monsters which the knight-errant must slay in the early days of his pilgrimage: spiritual death awaits those who fall captive to them, and loss of the heavenly vision. But to conquer them is no more than to gain admittance to the realm of the spirit, where trials infinitely harder must be encountered. Only those who have mastered the moral virtues are capable of the spiritual sins. If the young ruler had not from his youth up observed the precepts of the Law, he would not have been so much as asked to sell his goods and seek treasure in heaven. I have no commission to expound the doctrines of Christianity, but I am bound to

insist that the *Divine Comedy* will never be intelligible unless we remember that there is a difference between the verdicts of polite society and the morality of the Gospel. To call a man a brute or a beast is a very poor compliment, but if the philosophical meaning of such terms be only that he has sinned against *temperantia*, the virtue of the *concupiscibilis*, they are an accusation of *peccatum mortale* in its least incurable and least damnable form.

(5) A confirmation of the same principle is given in the comparison of carnal and spiritual sins. For the greater *culpa* of spiritual offences St. Thomas adduces three arguments, of which the first is only the greater vehemence of temptation in carnal sins. But, secondly, the superior gravity of spiritual sins can be proved *ex parte subiecti*, for:—

> peccata spiritualia pertinent ad spiritum, cuius est converti ad Deum et ab eo averti; peccata vero carnalia consummantur in delectatione carnalis appetitus, ad quem principaliter pertinet ad bonum corporale converti. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 5.)

That is to say, spiritual sins involve greater *aversio* and, therefore, greater *culpa*. Lastly, spiritual sins are the more heinous because the persons against whom we sin lay us under higher obligations. St. Thomas uses the words, *Deus et proximus, in quos peccatur per peccata spiritualia*, but we must not understand that he reduces spiritual sins to (*a*) theological sins and (*b*) sins against Justice. Such, no doubt, would be the most technical interpretation of the terms *in Deum* and *in proximum* (ch. x, p. 190), but the context, and many other considerations which cannot now be fully explained, prove that he means only that sins like *invidia* and *inanis gloria* are less self-regarding than *luxuria* and *gula*. All sin may affect others, but envy leads directly to ungenerous acts, and vain-glory may easily puff up the heart against God. The division of sins into carnal and spiritual is usually connected with the seven capital vices, and, reserving the proof for another occasion, I must assert dogmatically that all of these are sins of the lower appetite, not of will or intellect. It follows that *peccata spiritualia* are not directly and properly opposed to Justice or to the theological virtues.

Before leaving the terms 'carnal' and 'spiritual' I may refer to the maxim of Gregory, upon which St. Thomas often relies. *Peccata carnalia sunt minoris culpae et maioris infamiae quam spiritualia* (quoted in *S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 5, &c.) is the doctrine of Gregory, and the contrast of *culpa* with *infamia* supplies a perfect illustration of the difference between the verdict of the *Scrutator Cordis* and the stigma inflicted by human society. Moreover, St. Thomas applies the maxim to certain passages in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, and thus secures the support of Aristotle for the opinion that the graver sins are those located in the higher *potentiae* of the soul. The following objection is constructed :—

philosophus probat quod 'incontinens concupiscentiae est turpior quam incontinens irae'. Sed ira est peccatum spirituale, secundum Gregorium ; concupiscentia autem pertinet ad peccata carnalia. Ergo peccatum carnale est gravius quam peccatum spirituale.

Turpior here represents αἰσχίων (*Eth. Nic.* vii. 1149. b. 18 and 24), and Aristotle himself makes the notable addition of ἀδικωτέρα, which St. Thomas discreetly ignores. For his answer rests on the assumption that the *turpior* of Aristotle signifies only the *maior infamia* of Gregory. Incontinence in carnal lusts is the more disgraceful :—

quia minus participat de ratione ; et secundum hoc etiam dicit [sc. Philosophus] quod 'peccata intemperantiae sunt maxime exprobrabilia, quia sunt circa illas delectationes quae sunt communes nobis et brutis' : unde quodammodo per ista peccata homo brutalis redditur ; et inde est quod, sicut Gregorius dicit, sunt maioris infamiae. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 5. ad 3.)

Two passages from Aristotle appear to be fused together here, and *exprobrabilis* stands for ἐπονείδιστος (*Eth. Nic.* 1118. a. 23 and b. 1.) This method of interpreting Aristotle's comparison of θυμός and ἐπιθυμία is one of the most ingenious feats ever achieved by St. Thomas, and in some of the parallel passages there are symptoms that he felt it a strain upon his powers. Nevertheless, the final and undoubted opinion of St. Thomas himself, apart from all question about Aristotle, is that *infamia* is no proof of *culpa*, but rather the contrary.

Two passages from the *De Veritate* may conclude the argument. In the former we read :—

irascibilis est propinquior rationi et voluntati quam concupiscibilis : et propter hoc incontinens irae est minus turpis quam incontinens concupiscentiae, utpote minus privatus ratione, ut dicit Philosophus. (*De Ver.* xxv. 2.)

But afterwards comes the supplement :—

ex hoc ipso quod motus rationis magis participatur in irascibili, peccata irascibilis sunt graviora sed peccata concupiscibilis turpiora ; ipsa enim discretio rationis culpam auget, ignorantia culpam alleviat. (*De Ver.* xxv. 6. ad 2.)

(6) The last question relating to the gravity of sins, *utrum gravitas peccatorum attendatur secundum causam peccati*, takes us at once to the inward standard of measurement :—

in genere peccati, sicut et in quolibet alio genere, potest accipi duplex causa : una quae est per se et propria causa peccati, quae est ipsa voluntas peccandi . . . et huiusmodi causa quanto fuerit maior, tanto peccatum erit gravius. Quanto enim voluntas fuerit maior ad peccandum, tanto homo gravius peccat. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 6.)

We must understand that *voluntas* carries here so strict and exclusive a sense that even the *finis* is regarded as external. The will, indeed, cannot move itself without some *finis*, but object can always be distinguished from subject, and the *potentia* of willing is not the same as the *finis* which renders it actual. Hence the *finis* is numbered with *causae extrinsecae et remotae* of sin. Yet the *finis* does fall apart from other causes which act upon the will ; for, says St. Thomas, some causes

inducunt voluntatem ad peccandum secundum ipsam naturam voluntatis, sicut finis, quod est proprium obiectum voluntatis ; et ex tali causa augetur peccatum ; gravius enim peccat cuius voluntas ex intentione peioris finis inclinatur ad peccandum.

But there are other causes

quae inclinant voluntatem ad peccandum praeter naturam et ordinem ipsius voluntatis, quae nata est moveri libere ex seipsa secundum iudicium rationis. Unde causae quae dimi-

nuunt iudicium rationis, sicut ignorantia, vel quae diminuunt liberum motum voluntatis, sicut infirmitas, vel violentia, aut metus, aut aliquid huiusmodi, diminuunt peccatum sicut et diminuunt voluntarium. (Ibid.)

The will alone is the true and immediate cause of sin, but a *finis* is required to enable the will to act in accordance with its own nature. Ignorance and passion, on the other hand, hamper the will and make it partly the slave of other faculties. Hence the existence of a worse *finis* does not excuse sin but increases its gravity, whereas passion and ignorance, though not complete excuses, must always diminish *culpa*, unless the ignorance be wanton.

The various tests of *gravitas* I have purposely arranged in such an order that the earlier ones point chiefly to the *obiecta* of different types of sin, while the latter emphasize the judgement *ex parte subiecti*. But in each case, I hope, it has been obvious that neither standard excludes the other. All sins can be estimated *secundum obiecta*, but in all cases *obiectum voluntatis est finis*.

CHAPTER XII

THE *SUBIECTA* AND CAUSES OF SIN

TECHNICALLY speaking, sins are not classified *secundum subiecta*; nor has it actually been affirmed that the gravity of various offences is to be measured by the *potentiae* in which they inhere. Yet the necessity of alluding to the will and other faculties of the soul has often been felt, and especially when, in the preceding chapter, there was a mention of the causes of sin. This conjunction of *causa* and *subiectum* will be the chief topic of the present chapter, for to nothing is the term *causa peccati* so appropriate as to the will and the activities controlled by it. There are, however, 'causes of sin' in other senses, and again, the *subiecta* of sin may be considered otherwise than as causes. I shall, in fact, suppose in the first place that we are interested only in the location of various types of sin in the various faculties of the soul, and for that purpose shall briefly recall the doctrine of St. Thomas concerning the functions of the will and its relations to intellect or sensual appetite. The will, as he has taught us, possesses a self-motion, which, though not independent of the existence of God, the *ultimus finis*, is in all other respects a real autonomy. In addition to this, the will has the power of impelling all other powers of the soul (save the vegetable) to activity, and of controlling their exercise. There is, however, a sense, in which the will is dependent upon reason, inasmuch as reason alone can present to it the possible courses of action, and a sense in which its freedom may be hampered by the lower appetite. Yet the final decision rests always with the will, and nothing can absolutely destroy its inherent freedom. This doctrine of the will has already been applied to the virtues and can now be transferred without alteration to the vices. The will is pre-eminently the *subiectum peccati*;

for sins, as being moral acts, are always voluntary, and this is as much as to say that the will is their *principium* and *subiectum*. Nevertheless, all *potentiae* which fall under the direction of the will can also be regarded as sources of voluntary acts and, therefore, as possible *subiecta peccati*. We have, in fact, to remind ourselves of the important distinction expressed in the words:—

> actus voluntarii dicuntur non solum illi qui eliciuntur a voluntate sed etiam illi qui a voluntate imperantur. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiv. 2.)

The 'eliciting' is commonly the work of faculties other than will, and this is what is meant by styling sense and intellect *subiecta peccatorum*. The full responsibility for carnal sins does not belong to the *appetitus sensitivus*, but to assert that such sins are *in sensualitate* is only to say that

> actus sensualitatis potest esse voluntarius, inquantum sensualitas, id est appetitus sensitivus, nata est a voluntate moveri. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiv. 3.)

It is for the *mortal* element in sin that we must go beyond sensual appetite, for sense has no apprehension of the *ultimus finis*, and no power, therefore, to produce *inordinatio* in respect of that *finis*. Mortal sin thus exists only *in voluntate*, or *in ratione*, when *ratio* means not the cognitive act of intellect, but the controlling act of the rational part of the soul. The bare exercise of the senses, or of the intellect in its cognitive function, cannot be morally evil; but sense and intellect can propose objects inconsistent with the pursuit of ultimate good, and when the will accepts the wrong suggestion the *ratio culpae* is added. All this should already be familiar to us, and I may assume now that the phrase *subiecta peccatorum* will cause no further difficulty, unless, perhaps, when we bring it into conjunction with the term *causa peccati*, which has not yet been analysed.

Seeing that nothing in the universe, as St. Thomas read it, is more radical than the *appetitus boni*, the occurrence of any sinful act must always require explanation. God, says Dionysius, *omnia inclinat et convertit in seipsum sicut in ultimum finem* (*S.* 1. 2. lxxix. 1), and this attraction of all

things to their Creator is witnessed at every stage, from the original motion of the elements to the loftiest efforts of a spiritual being. But whereas the lingering of fire in the sphere of earth, the distortion of a plant's organs, or even the monstrous births in the animal kingdom, admit of plausible explanation; the reduction of *peccatum* to *culpa*, and the tracing of all *culpa* to *voluntas*, threaten to turn the belief in an *appetitus boni* into a piece of paradoxical credulity. For *voluntas* is in its very self the *appetitus boni* working in man, and yet we are told that *voluntas* alone must bear the blame for all the perversions of appetite disclosed in an ordinary human life. Something like this paradox, indeed, is foreshadowed in every denial of the dualistic moral philosophy, for it is impossible to hold that evil is negative without ending in the appearance of contradiction. But the climax is reached only in the theory of moral *peccata* and *culpa*. There alone do we fail to find a way of escape by varying the sense of *malum*: there alone has wilful and deliberate evil to flow from a *potentia* which is intrinsically an appetite for good. When the general formula that *malum* is *per accidens* is translated into the assertion that moral evil is *praeter voluntatem*, we know not how to accept also the opinion that *voluntas*, first and foremost, is the *subiectum peccati*. St. Thomas meets the difficulty with the words:—

malum dicitur esse praeter voluntatem quia voluntas non tendit in ipsum sub ratione mali. Sed quia aliquod malum est apparens bonum, ideo voluntas aliquando appetit aliquod malum, et secundum hoc peccatum est in voluntate. (*S.* I. 2. lxxiv. 1. ad 1.)

In one sense this answer is final, in another it is only a makeshift: final, because if evil could not become *apparens bonum*, moral sin would be inexplicable; a makeshift, because it gives us no hint as to how the illusion of good is produced, nor does it tell us how the attribution of guilt to the agent is consistent with the presence of the illusion. If the false appearance of good is the immediate cause of sin, what causes the false appearance?

Now, when first St. Thomas proposes the question, *utrum peccatum habeat causam*, he has to go back to the very begin-

ning, and satisfy his critics that the negative character of all evil does not banish the whole notion of *causa peccati*. He urges, firstly, that the *inordinatio* contained in all sin is not so much pure negation as the privation of some definite thing which ought to be present. Such privation is always due to some positive hindrance, which may be called its accidental cause. But sin is always a positive act as well as a privation, and the positive act will have a *causa per se*. Now every accidental cause is reducible to a *causa per se*: hence it follows that the negation inherent in sin results from the positive cause of the sinful act :—

voluntas carens directione regulae rationis et legis divinae, intendens aliquod bonum commutabile, causat actum quidem peccati per se, sed inordinationem actus per accidens et praeter intentionem. (*S.* I. 2. lxxv. 1.)

We ought not, therefore, to ask why a man breaks a rule or why he deviates from the course for which his nature is intended: for in their negative form such questions have no answer. We should rather ask—Why does a man do this definite and concrete thing? Why does he steal or lie or commit suicide? Such acts *are* wrong, they *do* break the laws of reason and of God, they *do* ruin the agent's own happiness; but St. Thomas refuses even to entertain the supposition that they are committed with that intention. You may murder your neighbour with all possible deliberation, but you cannot do it because you regard the act as *malum*: for this would imply an ultimate difference between moral and personal good, an hypothesis incredible to St. Thomas. By the causes of sin, therefore, we can only mean the causes of certain positive acts which the agent regards as good when he does them. That in point of fact these acts are evil is always *praeter intentionem*. We are tempted, therefore, to argue that the cause of the sinful act will always be an excuse for the agent, but we shall see that St. Thomas is able, through his conception of *voluntas*, to deny the truth of that argument.

But first let us examine the general classification of the

causes of sin. No less than three kinds of cause are mentioned, namely:—

1. *causae interiores.*
2. *causae exteriores.*
3. *peccata*, as causes of other *peccata.*

1. Reviewing them in this order, we find that the *causa interior* is at once broken up into *mediata* and *immediata.* The immediate cause of sin is *voluntas*, with the complementary *ratio*: the mediate cause is the *appetitus sensitivus*, with the accompanying *imaginatio*:—

> sic igitur duplex causa peccati interior potest assignari: una proxima ex parte rationis et voluntatis; alia remota ex parte imaginationis vel appetitus sensitivi. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxv. 2.)

Sin implies an *apparens bonum*, which acts as motive, but implies also the absence of a true *regula.* The presentation of the apparent good is the work of sense and imagination, but the lack of a proper rule concerns the reason. Finally, the decisive act of choice belongs to *voluntas*, and the sin then comes into actual existence. For most purposes we may omit any reference to sense-perception or imagination, and reduce the interior causes of sin to (*a*) *voluntas*, (*b*) *appetitus sensitivus* and *intellectus.* The inclination towards a wrong act comes through ignorance or through the lower appetite, but the responsibility lies always with the will.

2. Given that the will is thus the centre of the system, the classification of *causae exteriores* must depend on the number of ways of reaching the will from without. In other words, exterior causes can act only through the medium of interior, and we have only to inquire how many avenues the interior causes provide. Only God can act directly upon the will from without, and God (we may assume without argument) cannot be a cause of sin. Therefore, says St. Thomas:—

> relinquitur quod nihil exterius potest esse causa peccati nisi vel inquantum movet rationem, sicut homo vel daemon persuadens peccatum; vel sicut movens appetitum sensitivum, sicut aliqua sensibilia exteriora movent appetitum sensitivum. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxv. 3.)

The efforts of man or devil to persuade another to sin are

appeals to the reason, because the tempter argues that there is really no general rule against the act, or that the rule is wrong. On the other hand, the objects that arouse sensual appetite make no assault upon general principles, but only incline the will to disregard principles in spite of knowledge. In all cases the will makes the final decision. One is almost tempted to say that the exterior causes might have been neglected, since their only cogency lies in their power to stimulate faculties subordinate to the will. For the moment, however, I shall follow St. Thomas in recognizing exterior causes as a special class.

3. The capital vices are the most important, though by no means the only, example of one sin causing another. St. Thomas teaches that all the four *genera causarum* can be exemplified in the relation of one sin to another, but perhaps I may venture to pass over the 'material' sense, and also what St. Thomas styles the 'accidental' form of the *causa efficiens*. The important thing (as we saw in criticizing Witte) is to avoid a confusion between the 'efficient' and the 'final' sense. A sin is the efficient cause of another sin:—

> cum ex uno actu peccati homo disponitur ad hoc quod alium actum consimilem facilius committit; ex actibus enim causantur dispositiones et habitus inclinantes ad similes actus. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxv. 4.)

But the effect of sin as final cause is thus shown:—

> secundum genus causae finalis unum peccatum est causa alterius inquantum propter finem unius peccati aliquis committit aliud peccatum; sicut cum aliquis committit simoniam propter finem ambitionis. (Ibid.)

As efficient cause, *A* produces *A*: as final, it produces *B* or *C* or *D*, and this distinction is vital. Moreover, St. Thomas proceeds to identify formal cause with final, *quia finis dat formam in moralibus*. Thus, if it would be a little premature to conclude that none but final causes need in future be considered, we may be confident that these will outweigh all others in interest. The fusion of *forma* and *finis* is important for the theory of classifying acts, and the 'efficient' agency of sin in producing further sins should not be forgotten: but both

facts are of inferior moment to the conception of capital vices as *fines*.

When the three sorts of *causa peccati* are put side by side, the temptation to simplify them at the expense of the *causae exteriores* recurs. For if, on the one hand, nothing external can act upon the will but through the agency of sense or intellect, so, again, the thought of *fines* as causes of sin threatens from another direction the independence of exterior causes. We know how to distinguish *obiectum* from *finis*, but we know also that the *obiectum* of a moral being in his conscious actions has always the value and meaning of a *finis*. Materially, the *obiectum* is relative, perhaps, only to sight or touch, but to the man who exercises his choice it becomes an *obiectum voluntatis*. Hence the *obiecta* which St. Thomas names among the external causes of sin can easily be absorbed by the *fines*: and since there must always be an intimate relation between *finis* and *voluntas*, the whole study of the causes of sin can almost be compressed into two questions, namely, (1) Under what varieties of condition can the will pursue its object? (2) What varieties of objects (i.e. of *fines*) ought to be distinguished? If the interference or concurrence of intellect and sense with the will can modify the will's proper action, it is reasonable to recognize more than one kind of interior cause: and if, again, there is a hierarchy of possible *fines*, different species of sin will thus be produced. But is there really a third and distinct way of conceiving the causes of sin? St. Thomas continues to recognize the *causae exteriores* because he wished, in that connexion, to meet certain popular heresies, as, for instance, that God Himself might cause sin, or that the devil must bear our responsibility, or that original sin (discussed here under the head of *homo* as cause) could not involve *culpa*. But, on the whole, we are not likely to fall into error if we assume henceforth that only the interior and the final causes will affect the general theory of sin.

The interior causes of sin have been divided into mediate and immediate, and I will speak first of the former. The agency of intellect in producing sin is best understood in its negative form—that is to say, when St. Thomas discusses the

place of *ignorantia* in moral conduct. Something has been said on this topic already, but even at the cost of repetition I must touch now upon each of the three views of ignorance recognized by St. Thomas, namely, ignorance as a cause of sin, ignorance as sin, and ignorance as a complete or partial excuse.

1. First, then, ignorance is a true *causa peccati* only in so far as it can hamper or modify the action of the will. If the possession of a given piece of knowledge would have prevented the sinful act, the sin was caused by ignorance: but if the knowledge would not, in any case, have deterred the agent, the ignorance is said to be 'concomitant', and has nothing to do with the sin. Thus St. Thomas says:—

patet quod non quaelibet ignorantia peccantis est causa peccati, sed illa tantum quae tollit scientiam prohibentem actum peccati. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxvi. 1.)

The importance of this Aristotelian principle in the system of St. Thomas is that it emphasizes the supremacy of the will in moral action. *Voluntas* cannot be wholly divorced from *ratio*, but lack of knowledge can cause *ratio* to give wrong directions, and so cause *voluntas* to give a wrong decision. Now knowledge may be either universal or particular, and, if either be lacking, ignorance may be the cause of sin. If you did not know that parricide was reprehensible, or if you failed to recognize your father; and if, finally, the acquisition of knowledge would have kept you in the right path, then the cause of your sin was ignorance.

2. Here it is natural to pass to the second question—Is ignorance itself a sin? There are truths that altogether exceed human capacity, and there may be particular facts which a given individual at a given time has no chance of knowing. Ignorance in these respects is called *invincibilis* and cannot be culpable. But there are also facts and principles which we may know if we please, and some of these bear directly upon the conduct of life. Hence, says St. Thomas—

omnes tenentur scire communiter ea quae sunt fidei et universalia iuris praecepta. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxvi. 2.)

Ignorance of these matters is therefore sinful, and is very commonly ascribed to *negligentia,* as in the following statement:—

Manifestum est quod quicumque negligit habere vel facere id quod tenetur habere vel facere peccat peccato omissionis. Unde propter negligentiam ignorantia eorum quae aliquis scire tenetur est peccatum. (Ibid.)

3. Appearing already in two aspects, ignorance has now to assume a third, and thus become an extenuating circumstance or even a perfect excuse. But the truth is that this third view is only a kind of combination of the other two. Ignorance can excuse sin only in so far as it can produce it:—

Ignorantia quae non est causa actus peccati, quia non causat involuntarium, non excusat a peccato . . . sed ignorantia quae est causa actus, quia causat involuntarium, de se habet quod excuset a peccato. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxvi. 3.)

Complete responsibility for a sinful act implies that the will was free to act in accordance with the dictates of reason. But ignorance darkens the reason and so hampers the proper action of the will: therefore, so far as ignorance causes sin, thus far precisely does it excuse. But, once more, we have to ask whether the excuse thus provided is total or partial, and, evidently, this must depend on the degree of sinfulness in the ignorance itself. Only the 'invincible' sort of ignorance can absolutely remove the voluntariness of the sinful act: but since, in that case, no moral guilt is incurred by the agent, there is more interest in the effect of ignorance which might have been avoided. We must now remember that culpable ignorance is not always due merely to *negligentia,* for ignorance can be *directe et per se voluntaria* (*S.* 1. 2. lxxvi. 4), in which case the badness of the sin is positively augmented. On the other hand, when *negligentia* or something like it is really the cause of ignorance, such ignorance has undoubtedly a palliating effect, even though the negligence is itself culpable.

A revision of this threefold view of ignorance gives rise to a serious problem. St. Thomas has shown that the privation of possible knowledge can cause sin, but has he ever argued that ignorance is a first cause and true *principium* of wrongful acts?

It would seem rather that the ignorance is always caused by the direct or indirect action of the will, and the *ratio culpae* (as, indeed, St. Thomas everywhere teaches) must always come home to *voluntas*. Lack of knowledge causes the will to err, but the will causes that lack of knowledge. Is not the truth, then, that ignorance is a part of the cause of all sins but the sole cause of none? The doctrine historically connected with the name of Socrates had reduced all vice to ignorance, but to St. Thomas, and to all who have followed the Aristotelian tradition, this is only half-way to the truth. The *fact* of ignorance may be detected in all sin, but what is the cause of the ignorance? Once put the responsibility of the will behind the ignorance, and the Socratic thesis loses the greater half of its meaning: nor does it remain clear that sins caused by ignorance ought to be recognized as a separate class. We shall have to return to this problem very shortly, but, so far as the argument has now proceeded, the teaching of St. Thomas is summed up in a passage beginning with the words:—

Ignorantia tripliciter se habet ad actum voluntatis: uno modo concomitanter, alio modo consequenter, tertio modo antecedenter. (*S.* I. 2. vi. 8.)

'Concomitant' ignorance we know to be irrelevant, and 'antecedent' ignorance makes the act wholly involuntary. Then, as to 'consequent' ignorance, there are two cases:—

(*a*) uno modo quia actus voluntatis fertur in ignorantiam sicut cum aliquis ignorare vult.
(*b*) alio modo . . . cum aliquis actu non considerat quod considerare potest et debet, quae est ignorantia malae electionis, vel ex passione vel ex habitu proveniens. (Ibid.)

I may add that the former is called *ignorantia affectata*, the latter *ignorantia electionis*. Some obvious difficulties are suggested by these quotations, but on the whole it will be advisable to pass on now to the other 'mediate' cause of sin, namely, the *appetitus sensitivus*.

Ostensibly, there is a sharp opposition between sins of passion and sins of ignorance. That ignorance can lead the will astray has always been conceded, but with the mention of passion as cause there rises up the objection of Socrates, that

it is impossible to act contrary to knowledge. St. Thomas, like Aristotle, admits that there was a measure of truth in the doctrine of Socrates:—

quia, cum voluntas sit boni vel apparentis boni, nunquam voluntas in malum movetur nisi id quod non est bonum aliqualiter rationi bonum appareat; et propter hoc voluntas nunquam in malum tenderet nisi cum aliqua ignorantia vel errore rationis. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxvii. 2.)

Nevertheless, he maintains that it is possible to act contrary to knowledge: for there is a distinction between the universal and the particular premiss in the practical syllogism, and, despite a real knowledge of principle, there are many ways in which passion can induce a man to act contrary to his principle on critical occasions. Such sins of incontinence are said to be committed *ex infirmitate*. They are mortal in so far as the will assents to the prompting of passion, but passion itself is an extenuation of sin, for the simple reason that in blinding the judgement it diminishes the voluntariness of the act:—

quanto ratio et voluntas ex se aliquid agunt, non ex impulsu passionis, magis est voluntarium et in nobis existens; et secundum hoc passio minuit peccatum. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxvii. 6.)

Finally, St. Thomas gives reasons for holding that passion may be a partial without being a total excuse, and some of his reasons bear a strong resemblance to the corresponding remarks upon culpable ignorance. We read, for instance:—

duo consideranda videntur, primo quidem quod aliquid potest esse voluntarium vel secundum se, sicut quando voluntas directe in ipsum fertur; vel secundum suam causam, quando voluntas fertur in causam et non in effectum, ut patet in eo qui voluntarie inebriatur. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxvii. 7.)

The similarity to the statements about ignorance (cf. *S.* 1. 2. lxxvi. 4) is very marked, and the same example, that of voluntary inebriation, is given in both cases. Moreover, St. Thomas goes on to apply to the sins of passion a distinction between direct and indirect voluntariness, the indirectly voluntary act being that *quod voluntas potuit prohibere, sed non prohibet.* And then, reflecting upon those distinctions, he decides (*a*) that, though passion should wholly remove the use of reason,

the act is still voluntary if its cause was voluntary; (*b*) that if the cause, too, be involuntary, as in cases of sheer disease, there is no sin at all; (*c*) that where the function of reason is but partly suspended by passion, some degree of responsibility remains, and the excuse is only partial.

Once more we are constrained to ask whether sins of infirmity and sins of ignorance do not partly coincide. On the surface, no doubt, they are contrasted, for the man who sins for lack of *scientia* is surely different from him who *peccat sciens*. Hence St. Thomas says:—

> Communiter ab omnibus ponitur aliqua peccata ex infirmitate committi; quae a peccatis ignorantiae non distinguerentur nisi contingeret aliquem scientem ex infirmitate peccare. (*De Malo*, iii. 9.)

Yet when the theory of incontinence is worked out in the manner sketched above, we find that passion causes sin only because it removes or prevents the requisite *scientia particularis*, thus causing a certain form of *ignorantia* and, through it, causing sin. Just as *ignorantia* pointed back to *negligentia*, or perhaps to some positive passion, as its own cause; so the passions of the *appetitus sensitivus* become causes of sin only through the ignorance occasioned by themselves. But passion affects only *scientia particularis*, and one might ask whether the independent character of sins of ignorance may not be saved by confining them to *scientia universalis*. Personally, I should be sorry to be called upon to prove that St. Thomas keeps always to this view (especially in the *Summa*), but it is true that the meaning of *ex ignorantia* is most easily distinguished from *ex infirmitate* whenever *ignorantia* does signify the absence of *scientia universalis*; and in the *De Malo* there is the following very definite statement:—

> Voluntas semper tendit in aliquod sub ratione boni. Sed quod aliquid appareat bonum quod non est bonum quandoque quidem contingit ex hoc quod rationis iudicium est perversum etiam in universali, et tunc est peccatum ex ignorantia; quandoque vero ex hoc quod impeditur in particulari propter passionem, et tunc est peccatum ex infirmitate. (*De Malo*, ix. 3. ad 4.)

Supposing, then, that we are justified in accepting this as the clearest form of the true doctrine, we do arrive at a line of demarcation between sins of ignorance and sins of infirmity, but still it is by no means demonstrated that the former can maintain their independence. For whence comes the defect of *scientia universalis*? If a man profess ignorance of such precepts as 'thou shalt not kill' or 'thou shalt not steal', he must either have deliberately refused to make inquiry or have been hindered by *negligentia*. As before, the other 'interior' causes of sin rise behind *ignorantia* and threaten to reduce it to a mere consequence of themselves. The problem of ignorance continues to baffle us, and we leave it now only with a premonition that it must be revived once more in connexion with the 'immediate' cause of sin.

CHAPTER XIII

MALITIA AS CAUSE OF SIN

THE conception of *voluntas* as the immediate cause of sin is so important that it will be convenient to treat of it in a separate chapter. Hitherto the delusion inherent in sin has been traced to deficient knowledge or to excess of passion, but if those extenuations are now to be omitted, the cause of sin must be sought in a rational appetite which is in its very essence an appetite for good. And if, too, St. Thomas proposes to keep to his admission that a tendency to evil is inexplicable *nisi cum aliqua ignorantia*, we must seek for yet another mode of ignorance, not to be confused with those which wholly or partly excuse a fault, and not inconsistent with the conscious and deliberate choice of the evil thing.

After speaking of sins of ignorance and sins of passion, St. Thomas continues:—

> sed neutrum horum est ex certa malitia peccare: sed tunc solum ex certa malitia aliquis peccat quando ipsa voluntas ex seipsa movetur ad malum. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxviii. 3.)

Elsewhere he contrasts with less culpable sinners the man who—

> ex proprio motu absque aliqua passione inclinatur ad illud, et hoc est peccare ex electione, sive ex industria, aut certa scientia, aut etiam ex malitia. (*De Malo*, iii. 12.)

We must attend here to the term *malitia*, which in its special and technical significance enters now for the first time into the argument. An exhaustive study of St. Thomas would disclose many shades of meaning in the word, with, here and there, some uncertainty as to which was intended; but the senses may be classified with sufficient accuracy, and there is, in truth, but one distinction that needs particular notice. *Malitia* in the broad sense of *privatio boni* is as wide as *bonitas*

itself, but so long as it bears no special relation to human conduct our interest in it will be slight. After this, however, there come the two senses which must carefully be distinguished; for (1) *malitia* often means some particular kind of vice; or, to be more precise, any *vitium*, such as anger or injustice, is a special sort of *malitia*: but (2) *malitia* also means not a species but a *cause* of sin, and thus it is that St. Thomas employs the term whenever he wishes to show that *voluntas ipsa ex seipsa* can be productive of evil acts. The former sense is well illustrated in the following passage:—

Si aliquis miles in bello derelinquit ducem exercitus, inducitur hoc ad malitiam timiditatis. Si autem inordinate percussit proximum, hoc reducitur ad malitiam irae. Si vero aliquis inordinate lucratus est, surripiens aliena, hoc non reducitur ad aliquam aliam malitiam, sed ad solam iniustitiam. (*Eth.* v. 3.)

Here it is certain that St. Thomas does not mean by *malitia* a cause of sin. If that were his meaning, his assertions would be wholly opposed to his own moral doctrines; for he would be saying that a man who yields to *timiditas*, and runs away from battle, acts deliberately and *ex electione*, and this is exactly what the coward does not. Were it a case of treachery the act would be malicious, but timidity implies passion, and wherever passion influences the agent his act does not proceed from *malitia*. The causal kind of *malitia* is sometimes called *malitia habitualis*:—

malitia ex qua aliquis dicitur peccare, potest intelligi malitia habitualis . . . et secundum hoc aliquis dicitur ex malitia peccare, quia peccat ex inclinatione habitus. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxviii. 1. ad 3.)

St. Thomas adds that *malitia actualis* (in more than one sense) may also be regarded as a cause, but it is beyond question that, whenever *ex malitia peccare* is contrasted with *ex ignorantia* or *ex infirmitate*, the habitual *malitia* is intended —nor is any other sense of the term of more than secondary importance.

The thesis that the will itself, in its proper motion, can be a cause of sin, St. Thomas has now to reconcile with his abiding conviction that *malum qua malum* can only repel

the will. In all malicious sins, he tells us, we witness the postponement of a spiritual to a temporal good. Evil cannot be *secundum se intentum ab aliquo* (*S.* 1. 2. lxxviii. 1. ad 2), but when the sinner's will is set upon an object to which he knows the deformity of sin to be attached, then, since the good and the evil cannot be separated, *magis vult peccando incurrere offensam Dei quam delectatione privari* (ibid.). The evil itself is always something that man suffers and does not desire, but the sinner accepts the evil inherent in the act desired by himself, as the price that he must pay for his enjoyment. The doctrine, however, cannot stop at this point, and we are impelled to search out the origin of that *inordinatio* in the reason which destroys the sense of proportion and makes the spiritual appear less momentous than the temporal. Here St. Thomas has recourse to the notion of *habitus*, and proposes directly the question, *utrum quicumque peccat ex habitu peccat ex certa malitia.* He answers that the existence of a vicious habit does not indeed compel the agent always to act in accordance with it: for there still may be occasions when he acts *ex passione insurgente vel etiam ex ignorantia.* On the other hand:—

> quandocumque utitur habitu vitioso, necesse est quod ex certa malitia peccet: quia unicuique habenti habitum est per se diligibile [*a. l.* eligibile] id quod est ei conveniens secundum proprium habitum; quia sic fit ei quodammodo connaturale, secundum quod consuetudo et habitus vertitur in naturam. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxviii. 2.)

Habit can effect a complete perversion of the nature and inclinations proper to humanity, with the result

> quod homo eligat malum spirituale ut adipiscatur bonum quod est ei secundum habitum conveniens: et hoc est ex certa malitia peccare. Unde manifestum est quod quicumque peccat ex habitu peccet ex certa malitia. (Ibid.)

The proposition that all habitual sins are malicious being admitted, St. Thomas next inquires whether the converse also is true. Returning to his contention that inclination towards evil must require a *dispositio corrupta* to account

for it, he sets aside all causes extraneous to the will, and says that a corrupt disposition in the will itself

> vel est aliquis habitus acquisitus ex consuetudine quae vertitur in naturam, vel est aliqua aegritudinalis habitudo ex parte corporis; sicut aliquis habens quasdam naturales inclinationes ad aliqua peccata propter corruptionem naturae in ipso. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxviii. 3.)

Whether an *aegritudinalis habitudo* is a true exception to the proposed generalization is not very clear. The allusion to the body and to a corruption in nature are suggestive of an original disposition which cannot be culpable. Yet St. Thomas seems to imply that from a morbid disposition of this kind sins of *malitia* can issue. For the present we may leave the point uncertain, and attend now to a genuine exception, thus described:—

> alio modo contingit quod voluntas per se tendit in aliquod malum per remotionem alicuius prohibentis: puta si aliquis prohibeatur peccare, non quia peccatum ei secundum se displiceat, sed propter spem vitae aeternae, vel propter timorem gehennae, remota spe per desperationem, vel timore per praesumptionem, sequitur quod ex certa malitia quasi absque freno peccet. (Ibid.)

In these cases *malitia* does not involve *habitus*. This exception, however, can hardly be considered by secular philosophy; for, though St. Thomas does not say so on this occasion, there is no doubt that he is referring to the *peccatum contra Spiritum Sanctum*, a sin that results from the subtraction of the *dona Spiritus*. Among the species of sins against the Holy Spirit *praesumptio* and *desperatio* are always included, and on the assumption that, for the present, we are treating of *malitia* upon the level of moral philosophy, I shall make no further examination of this passage, but shall conclude that (unless the *aegritudinalis habitudo* be indeed distinct) all sins caused by *malitia* are habitual.

The chapter on *malitia* closes with a proof that sins of *malitia* are worse than sins of passion. St. Thomas is guided by Aristotle, but his argument is affected by the greater rigidity in the mediaeval conception of *voluntas*. Three

reasons for the superior badness of malicious sins are adduced, (1) that sin is primarily *in voluntate*, and that the proper motion of the will is more apparent in malicious than in passionate acts: (2) that passion passes away quickly and gives place to penitence, whereas habit remains: (3) that the malicious sinner is *male dispositus quantum ad ipsum finem*, whereas the incontinent man has still a good *finis* (*S.* 1. 2. lxxviii. 4). Each of these reasons is worthy of remark. The first shows that the criterion of *gravitas* is most easily located in the interior disposition of the agent: the second introduces the important topic of repentance, and thus may bear ultimately upon the difference between Hell and Purgatory: the third threatens to reopen the discussion of *ignorantia*. For it must, surely, be ignorance of some kind that leads the sinner into error concerning the true *finis*, and we must inquire whether this is a new kind of ignorance or one of those already numbered among the causes of sin. But, first of all, I must consider a little more fully the consequences of the doctrine that all habitual sins are malicious.

The appeal to *habitus* certainly mitigates the paradox involved in the conception of the will as itself a cause of sin. We see, at least, that the internal condition of soul required to account for deliberate sins cannot be original, and instead of facing the naked fact that *voluntas ipsa ex seipsa* can cause sinful acts, we have rather to consider what stages of moral experience the soul must traverse before it touches the extremity of corruption. And further, since the acts performed during the genesis of a habit are externally identical with those springing thereafter from the matured disposition, we ought to realize more clearly than ever that nothing definite as to the true character of a sinful act can be inferred from its visible surface, or from its effect upon the social order. A man is guilty of the act which he intends, and of no other. But so far as the office of will is usurped by passion, the *finis* of the agent lies in the gratification of passion, and not in the positive act committed. Even when the result does not altogether exceed the intention (as it does, for instance, when a blow struck in anger proves fatal), the coincidence between

the gratification of desire and the visible act is only accidental. A blow may be a sign of anger, but the blow is then a means to an end, not an end in itself. Thus do we begin to suspect that the species of *peccata* caused by *malitia* may be perfectly distinct from those caused by passion. On the other hand, *malitia*, in its principal sense, is not a species, but a cause of sin, and until it has been proved that St. Thomas can classify sins in such a way that the performance of a given kind of sinful act will always imply a certain kind of inward condition, we are left with an apparent conflict of propositions. For, at present, there are good reasons for believing, (1) that every act committed *ex passione* may also be committed *ex malitia*, (2) that the *finis* of one who sins *ex malitia* is never the gratification of passion—this latter proposition suggesting that no classification of the sins normally concerned with passion and the objects of passion can include the sins of *malitia*. I am not forgetting that mere passion is never culpable; but the sin of the will does often consist in the indulgence of inordinate passion, and I suggest that sins of this kind, however they be sorted into species, must be outside the whole genus of sins caused by *malitia*. Many sins are 'elicited' by lower appetite or intellect, but sometimes the will itself is the *subiectum peccati* and the same faculty both elicits and commands. Is it not patent, then, that the sins both elicited and commanded by the will are those caused by *malitia*? Or we may improve on the form of the statement and affirm that no sins are caused by *malitia* save those whose *subiectum* is the will. For *malitia* repudiates and excludes passion of every kind, and the total exclusion of passion is impossible in the case of any sins which inhere in the *appetitus sensitivus*. Eventually, therefore, if the vices can be grouped relatively to their *subiecta*, we ought to know which sins can be committed *ex malitia* and which cannot.

One remark may be added upon the character of the acts through which bad habits are formed. By hypothesis, acts prior to the maturity of habit are not caused by *malitia*: they must, therefore, be caused either by ignorance or passion; and if, for the moment, I may leave ignorance on one side,

we can only conclude that the road to sins of *malitia* lies always through sins of passion. Thus, although *malitia* and passion are mutually exclusive, there is a sense in which all malicious sins are caused by sins of passion. A passionate sin predisposes the agent to commit it again, and repeated indulgence at last extinguishes the flame of passion and leaves a fixed habit in its place. Sins of passion may therefore be called the efficient causes of malicious sins. I do not mean that when an act is committed *ex malitia* its efficient cause at the moment can be passion—for that would be a contradiction in terms—but one sin, as St. Thomas has taught, causes another efficiently:—

> cum ex uno actu peccati disponitur ad hoc quod alium actum consimilem facilius committit; ex actibus enim causantur dispositiones et habitus inclinantes ad similes actus. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxv. 4.)

Thus, then, are sins of passion efficient causes of malicious sins. *Final* causes they most certainly are not, for no malicious sinner does or can make the fulfilment of passion his goal.

The association of *malitia* with *habitus* has enabled us to draw away from sins proceeding *ex passione*, but the relation of *malitia* to *ignorantia* has still to be determined. We have heard that the malicious sinner is permanently in a wrong attitude towards the true *finis*; that he pursues an evil end deliberately because he believes it to be his good. The theory of habit helps to explain how so complete a perversion of *voluntas* can come about, but the proper definition of the ignorance thus stereotyped in the habitual sinner remains obscure. Is the *ignorantia* displayed in the choice of a *finis* an element, a cause, or an effect of *malitia*? Is it identical with either *ignorantia universalis* or *ignorantia particularis*, or is it of a different kind altogether? In our previous account of ignorance there was mention of a wanton ignorance called *ignorantia affectata* (Ch. xii, p. 219), and this, no doubt, is ignorance caused by malicious sin. But the ignorance caused by *malitia* must not be confounded with the ignorance

which is an element involved in every malicious sin. In all badness ignorance is implied, but—

ignorantia secundum quam 'omnis malus est ignorans' non est causa peccati sed aliquid consequens ad causam, scilicet ad passionem vel habitum inclinantem ad peccatum. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxvi. 4. ad 1.)

To sin *ex ignorantia* is not the same as to sin *ex malitia* or *ex passione*, yet both malicious and passionate sins prove by their very existence that the sinner is in a state of ignorance, and before we can understand the relation of these three types of ignorance to each other we shall have to embark upon an intricate and technical discussion.

The following passage will serve as a starting-point :—

ignorantia (1) quandoque quidem excludit scientiam qua aliquis simpliciter scit hoc esse malum quod agitur : et tunc dicitur ex ignorantia peccare.

(2) Quandoque autem excludit scientiam qua homo scit hoc nunc esse malum, sicut cum ex passione peccatur.

(3) Quandoque autem excludit scientiam qua aliquis scit hoc malum non sustinendum esse propter consecutionem illius boni, scit tamen simpliciter hoc esse malum ; et sic dicitur ignorare qui ex certa malitia peccat. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxviii. 1. ad 1.)

The first sort of ignorance is *ignorantia universalis*, the second *ignorantia particularis*, and this distinction is indicated by the words *simpliciter* and *nunc*. The third sort is associated with *malitia*, and, as a step towards a better analysis of it, we may look at St. Thomas's answer to the plea that, if ignorance excuses sin, malicious sins should be the most excusable, inasmuch as *maior est ignorantia in eo qui peccat ex certa malitia quam in eo qui peccat ex passione*. St. Thomas replies :—

ignorantia electionis, de qua obiectio procedit, neque excusat neque diminuit peccatum. Unde neque maior ignorantia talis facit minus esse peccatum. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxviii. 4. ad 1.)

The main point of the answer is that no ignorance excuses unless it be an antecedent cause. Ignorance displayed in the *electio* itself has no extenuating effect. Possibly this doctrine does not square exactly with the statements about *ignorantia*

electionis in other places (e.g. in *S.* 1. 2. vi. 8), but any doubts we may feel on that point are lost sight of in a greater difficulty. For how is it that the term *ignorantia electionis* can cover both the ignorance involved in malice and the ignorance involved in passionate sins? Such, undoubtedly, is the implication of the words *maior ignorantia talis*, and elsewhere, too (cf. Ch. xii, p. 219), we read of *ignorantia malae electionis, vel ex passione vel ex habitu proveniens.* But has not St. Thomas been at pains to distinguish the two kinds of ignorance associated, respectively, with passion and with malice? The malicious sinner is one who *habet malam existimationem de fine* (*S.* 1. 2. lxxviii. 4. ad 1), a thing not true of him who sins through passion: and it is strange that so wide a difference should lie concealed in the term *ignorantia electionis.* Furthermore, the mention of *finis* suggests that the malicious sinner is ignorant of some universal truth, and thus we begin to wonder whether his case is different from that of one who sins through *ignorantia universalis.* A moment since there seemed to be three types of ignorance, and now the three appear hopelessly confused.

The best chance of escaping from these perplexities is to follow *ignorantia electionis* back to its origin in the ethical theory of Aristotle, where it is called ἡ ἐν τῇ προαιρέσει ἄγνοια (*Eth. Nic.* iii. 1110. b. 31). In the Latin version the words of Aristotle are these:—

involuntarium vult dici non siquis ignorat quod confert. Non enim quae in electione ignorantia causa involuntarii sed malitiae. Neque quae universalis: vituperantur enim propter hanc.

Does Aristotle intend to identify *ignorantia in electione* with *ignorantia universalis*, or not? Commentators have often discussed the point, and, merely as a specimen of a modern note, I will quote from Professor Burnet's edition. 'Grant and Stewart,' he says, 'seem right in refusing to draw a distinction between these two in the present passage. Ignorance shown in the deliberate preference of bad acts to good, and ignorance of the universal rules of conduct, come to the same thing, ignorance of the major premiss of the practical syllogism. Προαίρεσις has nothing to do with the minor premiss as such.'

Now, for aught I know, the opinion supported by these three interpreters of Aristotle may be perfectly correct, but the key to St. Thomas's position is that he differs from them as widely as possible. I think, however, that the meaning of St. Thomas will become clearer if we go a little further back.

In the passage immediately preceding the words quoted above, Aristotle explains that a drunken or angry man sins *ignorans*, but not *propter ignorantiam*. He ends with the reflection :—

ignorat quidem igitur omnis malus quae oportet operari et a quibus fugiendum. Et propter tale peccatum iniusti et universaliter mali fiunt.

In the Commentary St. Thomas describes the state of the same two sinners, and says :—

et tamen neuter eorum operatur sciens: quia ex ebrietate et ira causatur ignorantia simul cum tali operatione, et ita ignorantia se habet ut concomitans operationem, et non sicut causa eius. (*Eth.* iii. 3.)

The sense of *concomitans* here agrees but doubtfully with the use of the same term in *S.* 1. 2. vi. 8, but the main contention of St. Thomas is that ignorance caused by passion is not the cause of acts done in consequent ignorance. The cause is the passion itself. Now this 'concomitant' ignorance can be either universal or particular, for the Commentary refers first to the man who—

operatur ignorans, non quidem propter ignorantiam sed ignorans in particulari quae bona oportet facere, et a quibus malis oporteat fugere . . .

Then it turns to another class:—

ignorantes autem universaliter fiunt iniusti quo ad alios et mali quo ad seipsos . . .

Of these two types of sinner the first is clearly the *incontinens*, but who is the second? Is he the malicious sinner, or is 'universal' ignorance something different from the ignorance produced by habit? Pursuing the text of Aristotle, we come at once to the words which I quoted first of all, on the subject of *ignorantia eius quod confert*. St. Thomas seems to assume

that Aristotle is still occupied with the same point, namely, that some kinds of ignorance do not produce involuntariness; but he thinks that, after dilating first upon the origin of such ignorance, the Philosopher afterwards explains it *ex parte eius quod ignoratur*, by showing that there is no excuse for ignorance of facts coming under the head of *id quod confert*. In expounding Aristotle, St. Thomas says first that such ignorance cannot befall a reasonable being *nisi ex negligentia*, but then continues:—

et hoc est quod dicit quod involuntarium vult (id est, natum est) dici non si quis ignorat quod confert, idest quod est expediens ad operandum. Hoc potest aliquis ignorare dupliciter, uno modo, in aliquo particulari eligibili, puta cum aliquis propter concupiscentiam aestimat sibi nunc esse fornicandum: alio modo, in universali, ut patet in illo qui opinatur omnem fornicationem esse licitam. (loc. cit.)

The particular and the universal ignorance are thus separated, but note what follows:—

et hoc est quod dicit quod illa ignorantia quae est in electione, per quam scilicet existimat hoc malum sibi nunc esse faciendum, non est causa involuntarii, sed est magis causa malitiae, idest peccati. Neque enim ignorantia quae est in universali est causa involuntarii, quia propter ignorantiam huiusmodi aliquis vituperatur. (Ibid.)

If any fact be undeniable, it is that *ignorantia in electione* is here not the same as *ignorantia universalis*. Moreover, the use of the word *nunc* proves that *ignorantia in electione* is here illustrated by a passionate, not a malicious, sin. I do not say that *ignorantia in electione* has nothing to do with sins caused by *malitia* (the point is here left dubious), but I must insist that *ignorantia in electione* is applied to the temporary effect of passion, and distinguished, therefore, from *ignorantia universalis*.

To supplement the account of ignorance as displayed in malicious sins we must now turn to the seventh book of the *Ethics*, where Aristotle is directly interested in remarking the points of difference between *incontinentia* and *malitia*. In his exposition of the first chapter, St. Thomas observes that a perversion either of *ratio practica* or of *appetitus rectus* will produce

moral evil. The incontinent man, whose appetite alone is corrupted—

rectam aestimationem habet de eo quod est faciendum vel vitandum, sed propter passionem appetitus in contrarium trahit.

But when corruption masters the reason itself—

ratio sequitur id in quod appetitus corruptus inclinat, sicut principium quoddam existimans illud ut finem optimum. Unde ex electione operabitur perversa, ex quo aliquis dicitur malus, ut dictum est in quinto. Unde dispositio dicitur malitia. (*Eth.* vii. 1.)

The fact that in malicious sins *ratio* is corrupted is, so far, suggestive of *ignorantia universalis*, and so, perhaps, is the allusion to *finis*. Moreover, the phrase *ex electione* seems to differentiate *malitia* from *incontinentia*. But let us look next at St. Thomas's eighth lectio, which compares the *incontinens* with the *intemperatus ex malitia*. The incontinent man pursues bodily pleasures:—

non quia sic est dispositus ut sit ei persuasum quod tales delectationes sint sequendae sicut bonae.

But:—

alius est, scilicet intemperatus, cui persuasum est quod tales delectationes sint eligendae, quasi per se bonae, et hoc propter dispositionem quod habet ex habitu. (*Eth.* vii. 8.)

Each of the two suffers from a mistaken *credulitas*, but the incontinent man escapes from it whenever the passion leaves him, for no bad *habitus* has yet corrupted his estimation of the *finis*:—

sicut enim in mathematicis principia non docentur per rationem, sic neque in operabilibus finis docetur per rationem. Sed homo per habitum virtutis, sive naturalis sive per assuetudinem acquisitae, consequitur rectam aestimationem circa principium agibilium, quod est finis. (Ibid.)

Out of this familiar doctrine of Aristotle comes the distinction between *ignorantia universalis* and *ignorantia electionis*. The latter means a false *aestimatio* of the *finis*, but this false estimate does not mean that the sinner has never heard of the right universal principle which ought to guide him. It means

that, through the permanent corruption of will and judgement produced by habit, he has ceased to *believe* in the right maxim; and this condition of the soul is quite distinct from that of the sinner who, through *negligentia* or wanton indifference, has never learned the nature of the true principle. The *negligens* (or he who refuses to inquire) lacks a certain piece of sheer information: he does not know that some acts are always wrong, and, consequently, he falls into the sin occasioned by *ignorantia universalis*, and is said to sin *ex ignorantia*. But the malicious sinner (I ignore the *incontinens* for a moment) may have known all his life that certain things are always wrong, yet bad habits have so corrupted his judgement that at last he makes wrong acts his *finis*, and does them *ex electione*. *Ignorantia universalis* is, for St. Thomas, perfectly distinct from the *falsa aestimatio de fine* which habit gradually implants in the judgement of the sinner. The former throws the intellectual and cognitive side of reason into high relief. True, there is negligence or wilfulness behind the bare fact of ignorance, but the sins resulting are such that a spectator would naturally attribute them to lack of some piece of knowledge. In sins of *malitia*, on the other hand, the intellectual aspect of ignorance is far less prominent than the alienation of will. Mere knowledge of rules is not wanting, but the power of believing in them is gone. Again, a single act of *negligentia* might lead to a sin caused by ignorance, but it takes a long series of acts to form the habit which produces a false estimate of the *finis*. In the *De Veritate* there is a passage in which St. Thomas names all the causes which may delude men into mistaking evil for good. He mentions (1) *impetus passionis*, (2) *inclinatio habitus*, and (3) *falsa aestimatio rationis in particulari eligibili*. The last of the three, he says,—

> provenit (*a*) vel ex altero praedictorum, scilicet impetu passionis aut inclinatione habitus; (*b*) vel iterum ex ignorantia universali, sicut cum quis est in hoc errore, quod fornicatio non sit peccatum. (*De Ver.* xxiv. 10.)

Passion and habit on the one side are plainly separated from *ignorantia universalis* on the other, and a full examination of the passage will convince any candid reader that it is *habitus*

and not *ignorantia universalis* which causes men deliberately to place their *finis* in sinful acts.

But we have by no means finished with *ignorantia electionis*, for we have not yet attempted to explain the fact that St. Thomas repeatedly brings both *passio* and *malitia* within the same formula. If Aristotle taught one thing more plainly than another, it was surely that *electio* is the very fact that distinguishes malicious from passionate sins. How then can St. Thomas see *ignorantia electionis* in both? The answer is that, Aristotle or no Aristotle, St. Thomas could not possibly admit that any mortal sin could be committed without *electio*. For *electio* is the characteristic act of *voluntas*, without which no act can deserve either praise or reprobation. Hence, if you argue that the incontinent man *non peccat eligens*, you are simply arguing that he does not sin at all: you reduce him, in fact, to the level of an automaton which, impelled by external forces, goes through a pantomimic representation of vicious acts. St. Thomas, therefore, had to hit upon some means of reconciling the rights of *voluntas* with the fact that Aristotle had found in *electio* a line of division between incontinent and malicious sinners. This he does, in technical language, by distinguishing between *eligens* and *ex electione*, the latter representing Aristotle's ἐκ προαιρέσεως (e. g. in *Nic. Eth.* v. 1135. b. 25). Thus when an objection is presented:

peccare ex certa malitia est peccare ex electione mali. Sed ille qui peccat ex passione etiam eligit malum. Ergo non minus peccat quam ille qui peccat ex malitia,

St. Thomas answers:—

Aliud est peccare eligentem et aliud peccare ex electione. Ille enim qui peccat ex passione peccat quidem eligens, non tamen ex electione; quia electio non est in eo primum peccati principium, sed inducitur ex passione ad eligendum id quod extra passionem existens non eligeret. Sed ille qui peccat ex certa malitia secundum se eligit malum . . . et ideo electio quae est in ipso est principium peccati, et propter hoc dicitur ex electione peccare. (*S.* i. 2. lxxviii. 4. ad 3).

Exactly the same doctrine is taught in the *De Malo*, where St. Thomas lays stress on the technical use of *ex*:—

cum dicitur aliquis peccare ex aliquo, datur intelligi quod illud sit primum principium peccati. In eo autem qui peccat ex infirmitate voluntas mali non est primum principium peccati, sed causatur ex passione. Sed in eo qui peccat ex malitia voluntas mali est primum principium peccati. (*De Malo*, iii. 12. ad 5.)

Even he who sins *ex passione* does undoubtedly make a bad *electio*, and thereby proves himself the victim, even though it be but for a moment, of a certain kind of *ignorantia*. The association of *malitia* and *passio* in the phrase *ignorantia electionis* thus becomes intelligible, for it is, after all, the same kind of ignorance in both cases:—

sicut passio in irascibili vel concupiscibili existens causat electionem inquantum ligat rationem ad momentum, ita habitus in his potentiis existens causat electionem inquantum ligat rationem non iam per modum passionis pertranseuntis, sed per modum formae immanentis. (*De Malo*, iii. 12. ad 12.)

The *incontinens*, no doubt, is said to retain his hold on the true *finis*, because he has so many lucid intervals. But he does not retain that hold while he is actually under the spell of the passion: at such times he is temporarily in the same state of mind and will as the victim of habit has come to for good and all. There is no *ignorantia universalis* in either case, but the true principle, which ought to serve as *finis*, becomes, either temporarily or permanently, a mere copy-book heading with no practical effect.

After a careful examination of the evidence we shall probably be ready to allow that St. Thomas had reasons for distinguishing sins committed *ex ignorantia* from those committed *ex infirmitate* or *ex malitia*. But I cannot see that he has ever proved, or even pretended to prove, that *ignorantia* is a self-initiating cause of sin rather than an intermediate stage caused by some defect of will. The *ignorantia* which, in a proper sense, causes sin is itself culpable. It is culpable because it is either wanton (*affectata*) or due to *negligentia*; and this is but one way of saying that it is caused either by *malitia* or by *passio* (*infirmitas*). I am not denying that the sins following upon *ignorantia universalis* may constitute a special group or species, but I maintain that, even so, all such

sins must fall either within the class of sins caused by passion or within the class caused by malice. Sins of passion and malice (to take them together) can be analysed into the following steps:—

(1) *passio* or *habitus* as predisposing cause.

(2) Some *actus inordinatus* involving *ignorantia electionis.*

Does the same analysis hold good of sins caused by ignorance? Here, I think, St. Thomas is apt to mislead us, for he is so anxious to show that the intervention of *ignorantia universalis* is a feature belonging to some sins, but not to all, that his readers are in danger of supposing that *ignorantia* is a substitute for *habitus* and *passio.* But this is not so, for *ignorantia universalis* must be placed *between* the two stages given in the above analysis. In sins 'caused by ignorance' the right analysis is:—

(1) *habitus* or *passio* (including *negligentia*) as cause.

(2) *ignorantia universalis.*

(3) *actus inordinatus.*

The learned in St. Thomas's writings may object that I have assumed too freely that *negligentia* can be treated as a mode of *passio*, whereas St. Thomas places it among the vices opposed to Prudence (*S.* 2. 2. liv. 2) and so makes it intellectual rather than passionate. But if *negligentia* is to be taken as an intellectual deficiency, we are merely obliged to move one step further back and demand the cause of *negligentia.* As St. Thomas says—

> negligentia provenit ex quadam remissione voluntatis, per quam contingit quod ratio non sollicitatur ut praecipiat ea quae debet, vel eo modo quo debet. (*S.* 2. 2. liv. 3.)

The *remissio voluntatis* which precedes and causes *negligentia* is manifestly one form of the infirmity of passion; and passion, therefore, is the true cause of any sins consequent upon the negligence.

Perhaps the best summary of the whole doctrine of ignorance in relation to sin is to be found in the *De Malo* (iii. 8), but as there is, I think, no point there that has not been remarked already I will make no further parade of quotations, but will conclude with one or two observations upon the

reasons for giving so much space to this topic. The fact is, that both the classification of the different species of sin and, still more, our estimate of the *gravitas* belonging to them must be affected by the doctrine of *ignorantia*. Are sins displaying culpable ignorance a distinct species, or is culpable ignorance an element discernible in every kind of sin? I do not propose to supply here any answer to this question, but we suspect now that, if in any class of sins ignorance is the dominant feature, it will be in those which exhibit *ignorantia universalis*. Yet these might very well be classed as sins of *negligentia*, and *negligentia* might easily be absorbed in the wider *passio*. The *subiectum* of sins of ignorance would presumably be the intellect; yet ignorance would be a very unsuitable name for some intellectual errors, such as Heresy. On the whole, therefore, we can see no absolute necessity why sins 'caused by ignorance' should be explicitly recognized in the systems of St. Thomas or of Dante, though some kind of recognition is possible.

More important is the relation of ignorance to the different grades of *gravitas* in sins. Our general conclusions about *ignorantia* as cause are strongly supported by the fact that St. Thomas, though careful to argue that malicious sins are worse than passionate, institutes no similar comparison in respect of sins caused by ignorance. In other words, St. Thomas does not recognize a third grade of *gravitas*, but is really content with two. We do, I admit, find statements of this kind:—

> maxime irascimur contra illos quos putamus ex industria nobis nocuisse. Si enim putemus aliquos vel per ignorantiam vel ex passione nobis intulisse iniuriam, vel non irascimur contra eos, vel multo minus. (*S.* 1. 2. xlvii. 2.)

But, in the first place, the *ignorantia* mentioned here may be *invincibilis*, or, even if we reject that suggestion, there is no evidence in the passage as a whole that St. Thomas intends to derive from *ignorantia* a third degree of *gravitas*. He merely names *ignorantia* in company with *passio* because ignorance is, under some circumstances, an undoubted extenuation of an injury: but this we may freely admit without conceding

thereby that sins when measured by their interior cause will fall into three groups rather than two. True, there may still be a doubt as to the exact place in the scale of badness claimed by sins displaying *ignorantia universalis*: but as yet we do not even know that those sins are more than theoretically possible, and, in any case, I shall assert without hesitation that no difference save that between *malitia* and *passio* is of real significance in the estimation of sins by their interior cause.

CHAPTER XIV

THE NAMES AND ORDER OF THE CAPITAL VICES

AFTER the exterior and interior causes of sin, there comes, lastly, the consideration of the senses in which one sin can cause another; and enough has been said in a previous chapter (Ch. xii, p. 215) to show that a study of the seven capital vices will embrace nearly all the facts that we shall afterwards need to remember. I must confess, however, that my treatment of this topic will not be wholly determined by the logical demands of St. Thomas's argument. For the mode of operation by which one sin becomes the final cause of others remains the same whether there be seven capital vices or seventy; nor do any variations of name and order affect the deeper questions of principle. But in view of the interpretation of the *Divine Comedy*, which is the true end of all our study of St. Thomas, it would, I think, be foolish to ignore this natural opportunity for the discussion of certain incidental points which must eventually be of large importance. I have no intention of saying here one word about Dante's arrangement of the capital vices, but I propose to look rather more narrowly at some of St. Thomas's own statements than would be requisite if Dante were altogether irrelevant.

As preliminary to the capital vices we must follow St. Thomas in taking stock of the two pronouncements of Holy Scripture, *superbia est initium omnis peccati* (Eccli. x. 15), and *radix omnium malorum est cupiditas* (1 Tim. vi. 10): for either statement seems to menace the tradition of seven distinct capital vices. We must observe, in the first place, that St. Thomas understands both *superbia* and *cupiditas* in their narrowest and most definite sense. Perhaps he was a little slow in coming to this decision, for it is manifestly

easier to make *cupiditas* the root of all evil if you interpret the word so broadly that it becomes equivalent to the element of *inordinata conversio* which is found in all sins, than if you reduce the meaning to *appetitus inordinatus divitiarum*. Similarly, *superbia* as meaning the element of *aversio a Deo*, which also is inherent in every sin, seems to reach far wider than *appetitus propriae excellentiae*. Nor is it difficult to quote from St. Thomas such statements as :—

> cupiditas et superbia, secundum quod in quadam generalitate sumuntur, non dicuntur quidem vitia capitalia, quia non sunt specialia vitia, sed dicuntur radices quaedam vel initia vitiorum. (*De Malo*, viii. 1. ad 1.)

Yet even in that context St. Thomas adds that *cupiditas* and *superbia*, considered simply as special sins, have a general influence over all sins, and the way is prepared for the final verdict of the *Summa*, which is that the meaning of Scripture is misrepresented if the name of either vice is understood in any of the looser senses (*S.* 1. 2. lxxxiv. 1 and 2).

Two questions are, therefore, forced upon us :—

(1) Is *cupiditas*, as the root of all evil, the same as *avaritia*, the capital vice?

(2) Is *superbia*, as the beginning of all sin, the same as the *superbia* which some writers at least include among the capital vices?

(1) If *cupiditas* is indeed to mean an improper love of riches, there can be no doubt of its substantial identity with the capital vice called *avaritia*. But it is possible that the same unregulated appetite for worldly goods may act in more than one way. Hence, in reflecting upon the term *radix*, St. Thomas says :—

> cupiditas, secundum quod est speciale peccatum, dicitur radix omnium peccatorum ad similitudinem radicis arboris, quae alimentum praestat toti arbori. Videmus enim quod per divitias homo acquirit facultatem perpetrandi quodcumque peccatum. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxxiv. 1.)

Now this is very different from the action of *avaritia* in its capacity of final cause. The possession of wealth makes all crimes easier, and thus does cupidity play the part of *radix*:

but when *avaritia* is called a capital vice, this is because all manner of sins are likely to be committed on the way towards the miser's goal. In the miser's case all the sinful acts will count as acts of *avaritia*—for all acts are specified by their *finis*—but sins prompted by the possession of wealth may be of any kind, and there is no absolute reason why any one of them should fall under *avaritia*. Hence *avaritia*, as *radix*, is not a capital vice, even though its meaning is admittedly *appetitus inordinatus divitiarum*, and St. Thomas contrasts *radix* both with *initium* and with *vitium capitale* :—

> superbia dicitur esse initium omnis peccati secundum rationem finis, et secundum eamdem rationem accipitur principalitas vitiorum capitalium . . . avaritia autem dicitur radix secundum aliam rationem. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxxiv. 4. ad 4.)

(2) The question about *superbia* does not admit of a similar answer. There were two courses open to St. Thomas: either to reckon *superbia* among the capital vices, and then to argue that its function as *initium* was other than its function as *caput*; or to exclude it from the seven, but still allow it a general supremacy and influence over all vices. The former course was impracticable, because St. Thomas was not prepared to argue that *initium*, like *radix*, was wholly distinct from *finis*. In point of fact, he declares expressly that *superbia* gives rise to all manner of sins because *propria excellentia* is the supreme *finis* acknowledged by every sinner; and this is an admission that *superbia* and the capital vices do act *secundum eamdem rationem*. Manifestly, then, *superbia* cannot be one of the seven vices, or no power of initiation will be left to the others. Tradition was here of some assistance to St. Thomas, for many variations had appeared in the list of capital vices, and, in particular, the terms *superbia* and *inanis gloria* had alternated so freely that neither could claim to be orthodox. I must explain, however, that the preference for one name or the other need not necessarily mean more than the choice of a word. For no one would have denied that *superbia* might conveniently bear the sense of *inanis gloria*, and the selection of the latter term need not imply the rejection of *superbia* on philosophical grounds. On the other hand, it is possible to differentiate

superbia from *inanis gloria* with the deliberate intention of placing the former outside the capital vices. Hence, in comparing various authorities, it may be quite misleading to discriminate between them on the ground that one catalogue includes *superbia* while another omits it. The difference may be important or it may signify nothing at all. St. Thomas himself, I think, does not conceive that there is need of active controversy, nor does he balance the various authorities against each other with any pretence of exactitude; but the writer habitually named by him in this connexion is Gregory, and the special point of Gregory's teaching is that *superbia* ought not to be identified with *inanis gloria*, but raised above all the capital vices. There are two opinions St. Thomas tells us:—

quidam enim ponunt superbiam unum de vitiis capitalibus, et hi non ponunt inanem gloriam inter vitia capitalia. Gregorius autem superbiam ponit reginam omnium virtutum, et inanem gloriam, quae immediate ab ipsa oritur, ponit vitium capitale. (*S.* 2. 2. cxxxii. 4.)

Gregory's position is then justified:—

superbia enim importat inordinatum appetitum excellentiae. Ex omni autem bono quod quis appetit quamdam perfectionem et excellentiam consequitur; et ideo fines omnium vitiorum ordinantur in finem superbiae; et propter hoc videtur quod habeat quamdam generalem causalitatem super alia vitia, et non debeat computari inter specialia vitiorum principia quae sunt vitia capitalia. (Ibid.)

With some slight variations of terminology St. Thomas always holds to this opinion. He regards Pride as a *speciale peccatum*, yet recognizes its general *influentia* over all sins (*S.* 2. 2. clxii. 8).

St. Thomas appears to have more than one reason for adhering to the doctrine of Gregory. He is influenced, in part, by his desire that the statement *initium omnis peccati superbia* should not interfere with the special rights of any one of the capital vices: but he feels also that *superbia*, though you count it a special sin, not a mere element in all wrong action, is yet so near to being the essence of every sin that it cannot sufficiently differentiate the species or the final causes of sin. Every sin involves an inordinate *conversio ad commutabile*

bonum, and all extravagant love of temporal goods St. Thomas reduces to inordinate love of self. But self-love, of the wrong kind, is nothing else but *superbia*. Thus we find St. Thomas asking *utrum amor sui sit principium omnis peccati*, and answering:—

propria et per se causa peccati accipienda est ex parte conversionis ad commutabile bonum; ex qua quidem parte omnis actus peccati procedit ex aliquo inordinato appetitu alicuius temporalis boni. Quod autem aliquis appetat inordinate aliquod temporale bonum procedit ex hoc quod inordinate amat se ipsum. Hoc enim est amare aliquem, velle ei bonum. Unde manifestum est quod inordinatus amor sui est causa omnis peccati. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxvii. 4.)

Should we doubt the identification of this *amor sui* with *superbia*, St. Thomas will set the doubt at rest:—

dicendum quod in hoc homo se amat quod sui excellentiam vult; idem enim est se amare quod sibi velle bonum. Unde ad idem pertinet quod ponatur initium omnis peccati superbia vel amor proprius. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxxiv. 2. ad 3.)

Whether, then, we speak of *amor proprius* or of *superbia*, St. Thomas has reasons for excluding this general desire for self-exaltation from the capital vices. He sometimes likens the position of Pride among the vices to that of Charity among the virtues. Charity is a special virtue because God is its *obiectum* in a peculiar sense: yet Charity diffuses itself in such a way as to deserve the title, *forma et mater omnium virtutum*. In the same way:—

superbia, quamvis sit speciale peccatum secundum rationem proprii obiecti, tamen secundum quamdam diffusionem proprii imperii est commune peccatum ad omnia. (*De Malo*, viii. 2.)

Just as the supremacy of Charity does not destroy the individuality of other virtues, so the permeation of Pride through all wrongdoing is not fatal to the conception of seven capital vices. The confusion of *inanis gloria* with *superbia* is very natural; for in the empty desire for honours and adulation the sinner comes nearer to conscious self-exaltation than in drunkenness, avarice, or any other vice. Yet Vainglory is far more limited than Pride. It means excessive indulgence in a certain kind of ambition, but Pride is a term which covers

every action which proceeds out of contempt for God and man.

So far, then, as there are two schools of opinion, one of which includes *superbia* among the capital vices, while the other omits it, St. Thomas clearly belongs to the latter. But for that very reason it is important to observe that he freely allows the use of *superbia* as synonymous with *inanis gloria*. Regarded as the *initium omnis peccati*, Pride is not a capital vice, but to bestow upon the capital vice more suitably called *inanis gloria* the name of *superbia* is a practice so general that St. Thomas himself repeatedly gives both names, as though he were indifferent which should be preferred. Thus in the very *quaestio* which contains the true doctrine of *superbia* we read:—

felicitas est perfectum bonum, ad quod pertinet excellentia vel claritas, quam appetit superbia vel inanis gloria. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxxiv. 4.)

The *vel* merely signifies that the two names are alternatives, and exactly the same alternative is found in the *De Malo* (viii. 1), and in the Commentary on the *Sentences* (ii, D. xlii, q. ii. 3). In one instance, at least, St. Thomas even writes *superbia* where *inanis gloria* would have been more appropriate. He is discussing the *concupiscentia carnis*, *concupiscentia oculorum*, and *superbia vitae* of St. John (1. Joan. ii. 16), and explains that

appetitus inordinatus boni ardui pertinet ad superbiam vitae, nam superbia est appetitus inordinatus excellentiae, ut inferius dicetur. Et sic patet quod ad ista tria reduci possunt omnes passiones quae sunt causa peccati: nam ad duo prima reducuntur omnes passiones concupiscibilis; ad tertium autem omnes passiones irascibilis. (S. 1. 2. lxxvii. 5.)

It will be observed here that St. Thomas does not go outside the range of the passions, but connects *superbia* with the *irascibilis*. On the other hand, I shall presently have occasion to show that *superbia*, when distinguished from *inanis gloria*, denotes a motive extraneous to all passion. Moreover, the sin usually known as *inanis gloria* would undoubtedly come under the head of *superbia vitae*, for the kind of honour that the vainglorious man desires is one of the *bona sub ratione ardui*,

which form the *obiectum* of the irascible appetite. In effect, therefore, St. Thomas takes the ordinary definition of *superbia* and applies it to *inanis gloria*. Still, his custom is to distinguish the two when necessary, and it remains a fact that *superbia* as *initium* is not a capital vice. Apart from this particular dispute, which is serious just because it is *not* merely a question of names, St. Thomas is frankly unconcerned. *Tristitia* will do as well as *acedia*, *ventris ingluvies* as well as *gula*. There are, indeed, different theories about the nature of the former vice, but the theoretical questions are irrespective of names. A certain kind of *tristitia* is sinful, and some writers call it *acedia*. The definition of the sin may be doubtful, but the name is nothing.

We can now turn to a more serious uncertainty, as to the order in which the seven vices should be enumerated. I call it serious because many of Dante's commentators have thought it so, but that St. Thomas was gravely exercised about the matter can hardly be asserted. On the contrary, he seems to display an almost cynical indifference about the actual order of enumeration. Yet certain collocations were fixed by argument or tradition, and the limits of variation can perhaps be determined. We must not, however, imagine that every passage in which all the seven vices are mentioned is relevant. Whenever, for instance, the derivation of the seven is being considered, we shall see that there are reasons for grouping some of them together, but not for inferring that St. Thomas desires to arrange the whole list in a definite order. Nor, again, can one base any argument on the order in which the seven occur in course of the *Secunda Secundae*. All through that part of the *Summa* St. Thomas is bearing the capital vices in mind, but it is the virtues, theological and cardinal, which determine the whole scheme, and there would be many objections to attempting a direct transition from the order of virtues to the order of vices. No passages, in fact, can safely be cited as evidence save those where St. Thomas is interested in the question, *utrum convenienter dicantur septem vitia capitalia*, or in some sort of complete enumeration of them. We are then confined to three or four instances, one from the

Summa, one (or, in a sense, two) from the *De Malo*, and one from the Commentary on the *Liber Sententiarum*. In the last case, too, I must premise that the list is not given by St. Thomas in his Commentary, but is taken from the actual text of the *Sentences*. I shall include it here with the others only because St. Thomas appears to accept it without protest, and this in spite of the fact that the position of one vice (*ira*) is not consistent with his own custom. The following three lists, then, may be compared:—

Summa (1. 2. lxxxiv. 4.)	*De Malo* (viii. 1.)	*Lib. Sent.* (ii, D. xlii.)
luxuria	luxuria	luxuria
gula	ventris ingluvies	gastrimargia
tristitia	avaritia	avaritia
avaritia	tristitia	acedia vel tristitia
ira	ira	invidia
invidia	invidia	ira
inanis gloria	inanis gloria	inanis gloria

The two main facts about these lists are (1) that each of the three has some peculiarity, (2) that all three are given on the authority of the same writer, Gregory. As to Gregory's own opinion I have nothing to say, but the mere perusal of the three lists must, surely, convince us that St. Thomas did not regard any one order as orthodox. He cannot have thought that Gregory's reputation would be damaged by an inaccurate version of his catalogue, and even more remarkable evidence of the same indifference to order can be produced. For in the *De Malo*, after a general dissertation on capital vices, St. Thomas proceeds to examine each of the seven at length, and in doing this he does not follow the order already given by himself, but (except that he begins at the other end) places them thus:—

luxuria
gula
avaritia
ira
tristitia
invidia
inanis gloria

We thus get a fourth order, disagreeing with all the others in at least one respect, and the only reasonable inference is that the order of enumeration was not so rigidly fixed as to bind the conscience of any philosopher. Nevertheless, it will be useful to search for reasons which may fix the position of, at least, some of the seven, and thus define the limits of variation.

But, first of all, what is meant by an 'order' of the capital vices? The only possible answer is that an order must mean an order in badness. Other reasons may perhaps have contributed towards certain conjunctions of vices, but *gravitas* is the only criterion that can affect our view of the list as a whole. Now as to the comparative gravity of vices we have already made careful inquiry, and the simplest point of departure will be the distinction between carnal and spiritual. Only two of the capital vices are carnal, and that is why *gula* and *luxuria* are always placed together at the less damnable end of the scale. But though St. Thomas never wavers in his custom of keeping these two vices in company, one is at a loss to name any decisive reason for counting *luxuria* less serious than *gula*. Gluttony is more sordid and degraded, but this would be, if anything, a reason for reversing the usual order; and I think we can only take our stand on the practice of St. Thomas, which certainly instructs us that *luxuria* should occupy one extremity of the list, with *gula* immediately beside it.

We must travel next to the other extreme, for there, too, something definite awaits us. *Inanis gloria* is assuredly the worst of the capital vices, and *invidia* is its nearest associate. The *Magister Sententiarum*, indeed, puts *ira* between them, but St. Thomas either regarded this as accidental or thought it superfluous to argue the point. *Inanis gloria* is supreme among the seven vices on account of its proximity to *superbia*, and the following statement brings *invidia* into the same society:—

> prima namque superbiae soboles inanis est gloria, quae dum oppressam mentem corrumpit mox invidiam gignit; quia dum vani nominis potentiam appetit, ne quis hanc alius adipisci valeat tabescit. (*S.* 2. 2. xxxvi. 4. ad 1.)

St. Thomas is quoting Gregory, but the words express his own opinion, and the alliance between Envy and Vainglory is emphasized by the addition:—

forte tamen propter hoc quod invidia manifeste ex inani gloria nascitur non ponitur vitium capitale neque ab Isidoro neque a Cassiano. (Ibid.)

Four of the capital vices are now disposed of, but how shall we arrange the other three? St. Thomas, I believe, makes no real attempt to fix the relative situations of *ira*, *acedia*, and *avaritia*, and we are left to pick up such scraps of evidence as can be found. More than once he discusses the status of *ira*, but only for the sake of comparing it with *odium* (which is not a capital vice) and *invidia*. The following statement is typical:—

odium appetit absolute malum alterius, inquantum huiusmodi, invidus autem appetit malum alterius propter appetitum propriae gloriae; sed iratus appetit malum alterius sub ratione iustae vindictae. Ex quo patet quod odium est gravius quam invidia et invidia quam ira. (*S.* 2. 2. clviii. 4.)

This tells us very little, for we know already that *invidia* must be worse than *ira*, and although there may be some importance in the common basis suggested for the two vices, I doubt if that bond is strong enough to make it impossible that *acedia*, for instance, should be thrust between them. I think, however, that we can narrow the problem a little by recognizing that *avaritia* ought to lie next to *gula*. In drawing the line between carnal and spiritual vices, St. Thomas hints that not every one had drawn it in the same place and that *avaritia* might conceivably be taken as carnal. Personally, he always adopts the other view, but he says, for instance:—

ratione tamen obiecti medium est inter peccata pure spiritualia quae quaerunt delectationem spiritualem circa obiecta spiritualia . . . et vitia pure carnalia quae quaerunt delectationem pure corporalem circa obiectum corporale. (*S.* 2. 2. cxviii. 6. ad 1.)

And again, the recognition of *bona exteriora* as a class inter-

mediate between *bona corporis* and *bona animae* (Ch. vii, p. 135), is to the same effect. On the whole, therefore, there seems to be a fairly good reason for placing *avaritia* as near as possible to the carnal vices.

The uncertainty about the two remaining vices, *ira* and *acedia*, is partly accounted for by St. Thomas's method of deriving the whole seven. He observes that the number of capital vices depends upon the number of *fines* which make a primary and peculiar appeal to appetite. But appetite can be stimulated either positively or negatively, according as the object is *bonum* or *malum*; and sometimes, too, good and evil appear in intimate conjunction, so that a man will pursue an evil on account of the good accompanying it, or shun a good thing for fear of the evil by its side. Four of the capital vices St. Thomas then derives from an analysis of the *bonum hominis*; for it is, in the main, out of direct pursuit of some *bonum* that *luxuria*, *gula*, *avaritia*, and *inanis gloria* arise. But the remaining three come into existence chiefly because men shun a good thing *propter aliquod malum coniunctum*; or sometimes (as with *ira*), because they strive after an evil object for the sake of the *bonum* attached to it (*S.* 1. 2. lxxxiv. 4). Thus *invidia*, *ira*, and *acedia* fall naturally into the same group, for the envious, the angry, and the spiritually slothful do not sin by giving way to the simpler temptations of appetite, but through a more complex process, caused by some intermixture of good and evil in the object. The envious man desires his neighbour's evil because the success of another hinders his own advancement: *acedia* means sluggishness in pursuing the *bonum divinum* on account of the bodily hardships that must be endured: *ira* means desire to hurt another because some evil has been suffered, and because revenge takes the guise of justice, which is a good. An alliance between these three vices might be inferred also from their common connexion with *tristitia*. *Acedia* and *invidia*, though differing widely in their *obiectum*, are both sinful forms of *tristitia*; and perhaps this is some intimation that they will not fall far apart. *Ira* is not properly a mode of sadness, but its cause is always *tristitia illata*. It is manifest, says St. Thomas, that nothing

moves men to anger *nisi nocumentum quod contristat* (*S.* 1. 2. xlvii. 3), and again:—

quod autem Philosophus dicit iratum cum tristitia operari, non est sic intelligendum quasi tristetur de eo quod irascitur, sed quia tristatur de iniuria quam aestimat sibi illatam. (*S.* 2. 2. clviii. 2. ad 3.)

St. Thomas shows in another way, too, that the gap between *invidia* and *ira* is not very wide. Each of them, he says, is *de bono alieno*, but—

si sit sine insurrectione, pertinet ad invidiam, quae tristatur de bono alieno, inquantum est impeditivum propriae excellentiae: aut est cum quadam insurrectione ad vindictam, et sic est ira. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxxiv. 4.)

Tristitia, when nursed and cherished, becomes *invidia*, but in a man of swift and inflammable temper it breaks out into *ira*.

The position of *invidia* has been fixed already, and the reasons for expecting contiguity between *invidia*, *ira*, and *acedia* are additional reasons for placing *avaritia* next to the carnal vices: but our final problem as to *ira* and *acedia* does not thus find a solution. The truth is that *acedia* is almost an alien among the capital vices. The other six belong, as one might say, to moral and secular philosophy, but the notion that *tristitia de bono spirituali* (or *divino*) can be sinful points plainly to a Christian origin. The relation of the capital vices to Pagan systems will have to be considered in another place, but even now I may safely assert that *acedia*, not *ira*, is the true source of our doubts, for the reason that it is almost impossible to make use of any of the tests of *gravitas* hitherto supplied by St. Thomas. On the one hand, *acedia* is a species of *tristitia*, and this means that its *subiectum* is the *concupiscibilis*. Hence, on the principle that sins inhering in the lower parts of the soul are less grave than those seated in the higher parts, *acedia* should be less grave than *ira*. On the other hand, it is also a principle of St. Thomas's that *maiori virtuti maius peccatum opponitur*. We turn to the *Summa* and find

that *acedia* is opposed to Charity (*S.* 2. 2. xxxv.), but *ira* only to Temperance (*S.* 2. 2. clviii.): therefore, *ira* should be less grave than *acedia*. Incidentally, too, we note that if both those tests be applied to *invidia*, two incompatible results will follow, for *invidia*, as a mode of *tristitia*, should be among the least serious vices, and yet it is formally opposed to Charity (*S.* 2. 2. xxxvi). It is only fair to say, however, that Charity is so wide and manifold a virtue that a theologian might easily oppose to it vices which, in the estimation of a moral philosopher, were of no great account. Still, there is some significance in the fact that *acedia* (much more than *invidia*) has to be opposed to the greatest of theological virtues before its nature can be fully understood. For the rest, I believe that there is no evidence strong enough to prove that *acedia* is worse than *ira*, and none to prove it less bad. But possibly a little weight can be attached to some statements about *ira* as a passion, which suggest that *ira* as a sin would gravitate towards the extreme nearest to *superbia*. St. Thomas teaches that the motive of *ira* is always *parvipensio vel despectio*, and one of the reasons is—

quia parvipensio excellentiae hominis opponitur; quae enim homines nullo modo putant digna esse parvipendunt. Ex omnibus autem bonis nostris aliquam excellentiam quaerimus; et ideo quodcumque nocumentum nobis inferatur, inquantum excellentiae derogat, videtur ad parvipensionem pertinere. (*S.* 1. 2. xlvii. 2.)

If men could wholly rid themselves of Pride and Vainglory, they would find no cause for anger in the behaviour of others to themselves. Conversely, the greater store one sets by his own importance, the more often will he take offence and grow angry:—

et ideo illi qui sunt in aliqua excellentia maxime irascuntur si parvipendantur; puta si dives parvipenditur in pecunia, et rhetor in loquendo, et sic de aliis. (*S.* 1. 2. xlvii. 3.)

Since, therefore, *ira* has this kind of connexion with Pride and Vanity, and since, too, we have detected a sort of common basis to *ira* and *invidia*, there is something to be said for the

opinion that the most accurate order of the capital vices is this :—

luxuria
gula
avaritia
acedia
ira
invidia
inanis gloria

But I admit again that the evidence for making *acedia* less grave than *ira* is slender, and we must not forget that in his fullest continuous exposition of the capital vices (in the *De Malo*) St. Thomas places *acedia* next to *invidia.* A cautious critic will be content to affirm (1) that the position of five of the vices is tolerably certain, (2) that the relative positions of *ira* and *acedia* are doubtful, (3) that St. Thomas was never at any pains to enumerate the seven in any particular order.

CHAPTER XV

THE CAPITAL VICES AS CAUSES

APART from all questions as to their names and order, the capital vices are of the highest importance, not only because they represent a classification of the modes in which one sin can be the final cause of others, but because they are likely to assist us in removing an obstacle which has never yet been thoroughly overcome. Both in respect of the specification of sins and in respect of their *gravitas* St. Thomas has pledged himself to maintain a twofold criterion. The definition of a sin and the degree of its badness are determined *secundum obiecta*, and the intrinsic badness of some actions cannot be altered by any variation in the state of a human will. Yet it is equally certain that *culpa* must be sought in the will alone, and that the moral nature of an act can never be ascertained until the intention of the agent has been disclosed. A partial solution of this problem has been offered in another chapter (Ch. xi, p. 199), but we were forced to reflect that ambiguities would never vanish unless St. Thomas could assure us that the very names of the various *peccata*, when used with proper care, were an indication of a certain inward condition on the part of the agent. Now the list of the capital vices is a list of the *fines* by which appetite can be excited, not a mere catalogue of offences named in the statute-book, defined in legal phraseology, and rated at a certain penalty. Doubtless the terms *avaritia, gula, invidia*, and so on, mean something definite and invariable, but they apply always to the final cause of acts, never to the acts themselves, as viewed by an external spectator. When we call a man a glutton or a miser, we mean that he is too fond of food or money, and when a moralist of St. Thomas's school brings an accusation of *gula* or *avaritia* he is not tampering with this normal sense of words. Never-

theless, there is all the difference in the world between the popular and the philosophical usage. A man who apparently devotes his whole life to the business of growing richer would commonly be called a miser, but not a glutton ; yet, supposing the end of all this acquisitiveness to be delicate living, the moralist would stamp as *gula* all the shady financial transactions in which our imaginary friend might chance to indulge. If we add a touch of melodrama and imagine him to poison his father for the sake of inheriting wines of some exquisite vintage, this, too, would be not murder but *gula*. Once deny this principle, and St. Thomas's doctrine of the capital vices becomes meaningless: once admit it, and the classification of sinners becomes possible. The capital vices, in fact, provide a reconciliation between *obiectum* and *finis*, the outward and the inward criterion. *Avaritia*, we fully admit, does mean inordinate love of money, and *avaritia* is wrong, we admit again, because it outrages the moral *ordo* established in human society. But when we pass on a step and ask the question—When and under what conditions does a man commit an act of Avarice? the philosophical answer is that *every* act designed to minister to the *finis* of the miser is Avarice, and *no* act which ministers to any other *finis*. The external aspect of the sin matters nothing: a man may accumulate money night and day and yet stand condemned for *invidia*; he may kill himself by eating too many peaches and yet be guilty only of *inanis gloria*. On this principle alone can the classification of sinners meet the demands of Justice, and nothing about the principle is more certain than that it is incompatible with the practice of an earthly law-court—and this not merely because the earthly judge can punish only external acts, but because, even when an external act has indubitably occurred, its moral nature, as judged by the *finis*, is in most cases utterly obscure. If *A* takes *B*'s money surreptitiously or by force, the law is satisfied that theft has taken place: but bring up before St. Thomas ten men who have confessedly laid hands on the property of others, and it is quite uncertain whether he would give the name of *furtum* to the sin of any one of them. St. Thomas neither denies the existence of the sin called *furtum*, nor does

he question the legal definition of it: he simply maintains that unless theft was the actual *finis* no act of theft has taken place. I say, then, that the conception of seven capital vices, to be used as a basis of classification, goes far to deliver us from the difficulty about combining an outward and an inward standard of badness. For when, speaking as a philosopher, you affirm that an act of *luxuria* has taken place, you imply by your very use of the word that carnal delight was the *finis*: in other words, you signify a certain condition of the agent's will, a definite degree of *aversio a Deo*, and (to speak in the manner of Dante) the prospect of a place in a determinate circle of Hell. In this world the *luxuriosus* may, perchance, suffer the penalty for some other offence—and justly, inasmuch as human law professes to judge only by external acts—but when he stands before the *Scrutator cordis* he will be judged by his *finis* alone.

True as it is, however, that the omniscient Judge will not be hampered by appearances but will penetrate always to the final cause of an act, the doctrine that I am trying to explain must create many problems, not merely for the casual observer or for the twelve honest men who desire to get rogues into prison, but even for the student of philosophy whose interest lies solely in working out an argument to its proper conclusion. If, for instance, the acts commonly known as *furtum* or *homicidium* or *adulterium* have no claim to those titles whenever they minister to one of the capital vices, how shall we define the circumstances under which they exist, as it were, in their own right? Think of the traitor, the forger, the liar, the slanderer, the thief, the murderer, and the whole dismal procession of moral outcasts. Does St. Thomas mean that every one of these must be ticketed with one of seven labels, on the ground that his *finis* must always have been one of seven capital vices? If so, iniquity seems, after all, to be a meagre profession, failing in a very marked manner to satisfy the ambition of those who find the path of virtue too narrow. And apart, too, from this sentimental objection, the most convinced disciple of St. Thomas must feel that there is a difference between forgery and avarice, or between *homicidium* and *ira*.

Moreover, St. Thomas insists that some sins are *mortalia ex genere*, and as examples he names, for the most part, not any of the capital vices, but visible crimes like murder or theft. Nay, he even tells us explicitly that a vice can be capital without being mortal *ex genere*:—

non est aestimandum quod omnia peccata quae dicuntur capitalia sint ex genere suo mortalia: alioquin sequeretur quod omne peccatum gulae et irae esse peccatum mortale, quod patet esse falsum. Unde neque oportet quod omnis inanis gloria sit peccatum mortale, licet inanis gloria sit vitium capitale. (*De Malo*, ix. 2. ad 5.)

He then explains that a vice is called capital simply because other sins frequently arise from it. But these other sins may be either mortal or venial, and the truth is that a capital vice is mortal only when the sins produced by itself have the mortal quality:—

sicut si aliquis intantum afficitur ad delectationem gustus quod propter hoc velit mortaliter peccare, ipsa etiam gula erit ei peccatum mortale. (Ibid.)

I do not think, indeed, that we need be troubled by the thought that capital vices can exist in a venial form, for it is only in so far as they are mortal that they can affect the comparison between Hell and Purgatory: but we must face the fact that a sin can be *mortale ex genere* without reference to any capital vice, and when St. Thomas calls a man thief or murderer, he most certainly does not imply that some one of the capital vices must have been the *finis*. On the contrary, I shall venture to say that theft and murder, in the strict sense of those words, cannot possibly be caused by *avaritia*, *ira*, or any of the seven. I do not know how the average student of Dante is accustomed to look upon the capital vices, but the majority of commentators seem either to assume that every sin is an instance or effect of the capital vices, or to ignore the vital question altogether. Vital question it certainly is, for if there is a whole class of mortal sins that cannot be caused by the capital vices, all manner of consequences may follow, and, among others, the anticipation of an exact parallelism between Hell and Purgatory may be less

reasonable than has usually been supposed. No one would deny that any *peccatum*, in the concrete, external sense, might be produced by any capital vice: but such an admission is irrelevant to the issue, for it does not prove that a sin like murder, when taken as the true *finis* of the sinner, ought to be referred to one of the capital vices: still less does it tell us what is meant by asserting that murder can be an end in itself.

Here we must look again at St. Thomas's method of deriving the capital vices. His main principle is that

illa vitia capitalia dicuntur quorum fines habent quasdam primarias rationes movendi appetitum. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxxiv. 4.)

Then follows an analysis of the ways in which appetite is stimulated, with the result that four of the seven are thus derived:—

obiectum	*vitium*
bonum animae	inanis gloria
bonum exterius	avaritia
bonum corporis	gula, luxuria

In the *obiecta* of the remaining three *bonum* and *malum* are complicated, and how to define the *obiectum* most accurately is not always easy to decide. With *acedia* the refusal to undergo hardships for the sake of a higher good is the prominent feature, but with *invidia* and *ira* the desire for compassing the evil of others is perhaps more evident than the fact that the sinner is really trying to be rid of a wound in his own spirit. Our present purpose, however, will best be served by the following table:—

obiectum	*vitium*
malum animae	invidia, ira
malum corporis	acedia

The term *malum animae* is adopted in order to characterize the kind of evil that the sinner refuses to bear when his own *bonum animae* seems to be imperilled. The point is that all the *mala* connected with these three vices are supposed to lie within the same bounds as the *triplex bonum* mentioned above;

and that is why (with warrant from St. Thomas in *S.* I. 2. lxxxiv. 4) I couple *acedia* with *malum corporis*, despite the spiritual nature of the *bonum* which the *acediosus* declines. The position of *acedia* is always anomalous, and we have to deal with it as best we can.

One conclusion, then, is obvious—that the whole extent of the capital vices is no wider than the range of the *appetitus sensitivus*, and, therefore, very much narrower than the potentiality of evil in the human soul. This conclusion follows either from the statements of St. Thomas as to the relation of the capital vices to appetite, or from a consideration of the *bona* and *mala* which form their *obiecta*. But it is in the Commentary on the *Sentences* that St. Thomas is most obliging in his manner of expression. He begins as follows:—

oportet ut illa peccata praecipue capitalia dicantur in quorum fines appetitus corruptus magis natus est tendere. Huiusmodi autem sunt peccata illa quae circa principalia obiecta sensibilium potentiarum sunt, quia ex corruptione sensualitatis peccata in nobis oriuntur. (*Sent.* ii, D. xlii, q. ii. 3.)

Then he makes the usual division into *concupiscibilis* and *irascibilis*, apportioning the vices thus:—

concupiscibilis	*irascibilis*
luxuria	ira
gula	invidia
avaritia	inanis gloria
acedia	

Of *acedia* he says here:—

ex eo quod fugitur inordinate impedimentum delectationis sensibilis est acedia. (Ibid.)

Beyond doubt, then, the *fines* which give the seven capital vices are all relative to sensual appetite, and this can only mean that every mortal sin caused by one of the said vices must consist in excessive indulgence of passion. The sins themselves are not passions, but they are *circa passiones* and their *subiectum* is the *appetitus inferior*. On the other hand, it was shown in another chapter (Ch. xiii, p. 223) that a sin caused by *malitia* was one caused by *voluntas* pure and simple, with no ingredient of passion to diminish the guilt. It

followed that all such sins must be *in voluntate sicut in subiecto* and that none of them could be *circa passiones*: for whenever and however passion is allowed admission, the naked deliberateness of *malitia* is rendered impossible. If, then, we have now assured ourselves that all the capital vices are *circa passiones*, there is no help for it but to conclude that no sin caused by *malitia* can possibly be caused by any of the capital vices.

The contention that *malitia* and the capital vices exclude each other will, however, be misleading if we fail to remember that we are speaking of two different kinds of cause. *Malitia* is an interior, efficient cause; the capital vices are final. When, therefore, we assert that they are mutually exclusive, we must mean that the interior cause corresponding to the capital vices is not *malitia* but *passio*. The reason for insisting upon this small point is that we are thereby prompted to inquire for the final cause accompanying *malitia*. Some final cause there must evidently be, for acts of malice are, in the fullest sense, done *ex voluntate*, and *voluntas* presupposes a *finis*. What, then, is the *finis* of those who sin maliciously? The answer is, that in a malicious sin two conditions are always fulfilled: (1) the act willed is always *malum per se*, (2) it is willed as an end in itself, not as a means. In other words, the *fines* proportionate to *malitia* are sinful acts regarded as ends in themselves; and thus it comes about that he who steals or murders *ex malitia* is rightly branded as thief or murderer, while he who performs the same external acts for the gratification of envy or avarice or anger is counted guilty of whichever capital vice it may chance to be, but not of murder or theft.

But the idea of willing a *peccatum* for its own sake is still unexplained. For though we have heard of 'murder as a fine art', these modern refinements must not be expected in the philosophy of St. Thomas, and the *obiectum* or *finis* of malicious sins is not comprehended in the formula 'art for art's sake'. As regards St. Thomas, the point is that the deliberate willing of evil acts for their own sake has to be reconciled with the doctrine that no man can will that which he believes to be *his own* evil: and the only possible reconciliation is that, when *malum* is deliberately intended, it must

always be *malum alienum*. Now *malum alienum* covers offences against both God and man, and some sins, we learned long ago, are properly styled *peccata in Deum*. But if these be set aside for the present, as hardly falling within the scope of moral philosophy, we may safely infer that the end and object of every malicious sin is *malum proximi*. Unquestionably, the sinner who wills to defraud or murder his neighbour is compassing his own damnation, but the profoundest kind of ignorance, that which is involved in *malitia*, has made him incapable of believing that a morally evil act is necessarily his own evil. He wills the crime because he knows that it will damage his neighbour: he does it without passion and with cold-blooded deliberateness: but he does not will it because it entails his own destruction in the next world, for this St. Thomas reckons impossible. The act, then, is willed as *malum*, but only as *malum alienum*.

But some of the capital vices, especially *ira* and *invidia*, cause a man to will his neighbour's evil, and perhaps we are hardly satisfied that the inward condition of the malicious sinner is other than that temporarily produced by anger or envy. Once more St. Thomas comes to our assistance and, by his conception of *odium*, enables us to differentiate in another way the worst injuries to God and man from others less grave. As a passion, *odium* is normally excited by *malum*, just as *amor* is excited by *bonum*: but *odium* can also be a sin, because men can reach the point of hating what they ought to love. The passion must not be confused with the sin, but we have noted already (Ch. xiv, p. 250) that, even when speaking of the passions, St. Thomas argues that *odium* is worse than *ira*, because, as he says again:—

> odiens appetit malum inimici inquantum est malum, iratus autem . . . non inquantum est malum, sed inquantum habet quamdam rationem boni. (*S.* 1. 2. xlvi. 6.)

Afterwards, when *odium* is more distinctly conceived as a perverted state of *voluntas*, the statements of St. Thomas exactly suit our necessity. First he shows that, in a limited sense, it is possible to hate God, and maintains that *odium Dei* is the worst of all sins, inasmuch as

ratio culpae consistit in voluntaria aversione a Deo Haec autem voluntaria aversio a Deo per se quidem importatur in odio Dei; in aliis autem peccatis quasi participative et secundum aliud. (*S.* 2. 2. xxxiv. 2.)

Then he passes from *Deus* to *proximus* and asks whether *odium proximi* is the gravest sin that one man can commit against another. As regards mere *nocumentum* this is evidently not so—for *nocumentum* means external damage—but as regards *deordinatio*:—

odium est maius peccatum quam exteriores actus . . . quia scilicet per odium deordinatur voluntas hominis, quae est potissimum in homine, et ex qua est radix peccati . . . et si quid culpae est in exterioribus peccatis quae contra proximum committuntur, totum est ex interiori odio. (*S.* 2. 2. xxxiv. 4.)

The interconnexion of *odium*, *voluntas*, and *culpa* in this passage shows that *odium* will always be associated with *malitia*, and immediately afterwards St. Thomas explains why *odium* is not a capital vice:—

vitium capitale est ex quo ut frequentius alia vitia oriuntur. Vitium autem est contra naturam hominis inquantum est animal rationale. In his autem quae contra naturam fiunt, paulatim id quod est naturae corrumpitur. Unde oportet quod primo recedatur ab eo quod est minus secundum naturam, et ultimo ab eo quod est maxime secundum naturam . . . id autem quod est maxime et primo naturale homini est quod diligat bonum, et praecipue bonum divinum et bonum proximi; et ideo odium . . . non est primum in destructione virtutis quae fit per vitia, sed ultimum . . . et ideo odium non est vitium capitale. (*S.* 2. 2. xxxiv. 5.)

By *vitia capitalia* we signify the existence of the ends which most naturally attract human appetite, and sin arises in the pursuing of them only because all passions need guidance and restraint. But *odium* cannot arise at all, save by long cherishing of capital vices, such as *ira* and *invidia*. It is an ultimate condition of the will, possible only when passion is extinguished. In fits of anger or envy the sinner may desire his neighbour's evil, but the phantom of good still hovers before him, and he is not yet delivered over to the pale and malignant demon of hatred. Thus hatred is caused by the

capital vices, not *secundum rationem causae finalis*, but 'efficiently', because they are its historical antecedents. Exactly the same thing was proved of *malitia* (Ch. xiii, p. 229), for *malitia* implies the perfection of *habitus*, and habit grows out of repeated indulgence in passionate acts. In a certain sense, therefore, *malitia* is caused by the capital vices, and in the same sense *odium* is caused by *invidia*:—

odium proximi est ultimum in progressu peccati, eo quod opponitur dilectioni qua naturaliter proximus diligitur. Quod autem aliquis recedat ab eo quod est naturale contingit ex hoc quod intendit vitare aliquid quod est naturaliter fugiendum. Naturaliter autem omne animal fugit tristitiam . . . et ideo sicut ex delectatione causatur amor, ita ex tristitia causatur odium . . . unde cum invidia sit tristitia de bono proximi, sequitur quod bonum proximi reddatur nobis odiosum, et inde est quod ex invidia oritur odium. (*S.* 2. 2. xxxiv. 6.)

And so with anger:—

primo per iram appetimus malum proximi . . . prout scilicet habet rationem vindictae: postea autem per continuitatem irae pervenitur ad hoc quod homo malum proximi absolute desideret, quod pertinet ad rationem odii. (Ibid. ad 3.)

Thus *odium* supplements *malitia*. The malicious sinner wills evil for its own sake, with no deluding ignorance or passion; but evil when willed for its own sake can only be *malum alienum*; and *malum alienum* cannot be deliberately willed until mere anger or envy have given place to *odium*. We may call *odium* the final cause of malicious acts without interfering with the doctrine that the act is an end in itself, for to hate, and to will murder or theft for its own sake, are but two expressions for the same thing.

Our analysis of *odium* may conveniently be followed by a second inspection of *superbia*, which also is intimately allied with *malitia*. Pride, though a special sin, may be regarded as the final cause of all sins, but St. Thomas warns us against assuming that all sins are *invariably* caused in that way. For, he says:—

quamvis omnia praecepta legis possit quis transgredi qualicumque peccato ex contemptu, qui pertinet ad superbiam,

non tamen semper ex contemptu aliquis praecepta divina transgreditur, sed quandoque ex ignorantia quandoque ex infirmitate. (*S.* 2. 2. clxii. 2.)

Superbia is here set in exactly the position usually assigned to *malitia*. It denotes the last and worst internal state of the sinner and is, therefore, contrasted with the more excusable *ignorantia* and *infirmitas*. So again, St. Thomas teaches that *superbia* is the worst of all sins in respect of *aversio*:—

quia in aliis peccatis homo a Deo avertitur vel propter ignorantiam vel propter infirmitatem . . . sed superbia habet aversionem a Deo ex hoc ipso quod non vult Deo et eius regulae subici . . . et ideo averti a Deo et eius praeceptis, quod est quasi consequens in aliis praeceptis, per se ad superbiam pertinet, cuius actus est Dei contemptus. (*S.* 2. 2. clxii. 6.)

Now *odium* also he calls the gravest of sins, and for reasons almost verbally the same: hence we conclude that the two sins, though not exactly identical, are so akin to each other that both will accompany *malitia*. On the whole, it would appear that *odium* is more prominent in relation to *malum proximi*, *superbia* in relation to *malum divinum*. God in His essence is *ipsa bonitas* and cannot be hated by His creatures, but the wicked man comes to hate God *inquantum scilicet apprehenditur peccatorum prohibitor et poenarum inflictor* (*S.* 2. 2. xxxiv. 1). This, however, is too limited a sin to include all the acts by which the laws of God are deliberately broken, and *superbia* is a far more adequate name for that uplifting of the heart against God which caused the downfall of even Satan and his angels. On the other hand, though contempt for others is certainly an aspect of malicious sins against human beings, the term *odium proximi* is appropriate to almost every genuine *iniuria*. To one who sins maliciously the motive is hatred or contempt of him against whom he sins; and there is no need to balance the claims of *odium* and *superbia* very accurately, so long as we realize that both of them, like *malitia*, are outside the whole area of the capital vices.

How much nearer, then, have we come to a terminology in which the names of *peccata* are an index to the degree of *culpa* incurred in committing them? My contention is that we do come a great step nearer by a true conception of the capital vices. For to accuse a man of *luxuria*, *gula*, or any of the others, is always to imply that he has sinned *ex infirmitate*, not *ex malitia*. But when we pass beyond the sphere of capital vices, the danger of ambiguity is very much greater. *Odium* and *superbia*, no doubt, are names indicative of malicious intention, but *odium* and *superbia* are less often considered as special sins than as the inward aspect of all *peccata* by which the wrong of others is deliberately compassed, and one cannot pretend that names like *furtum*, *homicidium*, and *adulterium* are always so used by St. Thomas as to imply *malitia* in the agent. St. Thomas introduces such names some scores or hundreds of times in the course of his writings, and only on a few occasions is he peculiarly interested in estimating actions by the intention of the agent. Inevitably, therefore, there is much ambiguity and many statements of this kind:—

videmus quod multa homicidia et multa adulteria per passionem committuntur. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxviii. 8.)

Here the meaning is perfectly simple, for it is indubitable that the acts in question are often committed *ex passione*. Yet, unless I am totally misrepresenting St. Thomas, the agent would, in such cases, be accounted guilty, not of homicide or adultery, but of *ira* or *luxuria*: whereas, if the acts had been done *ex malitia*, *homicidium* and *adulterium* would then have been correct names for the sins. Or look, again, at the term *filiae*, as when one vice is said to be the *filia* of another. All the capital vices have *filiae*—some of Dante's commentators have even proposed to fill up the lower circles of Hell with them—and we must note, too, that the relation of mother to daughter is that of final cause to effect:—

dicendum quod secundum eamdem rationem aliquod vitium dicitur esse caput et mater, inquantum scilicet alia vitia ex se oriuntur, ordinata ad finem eius. (*De Malo*, ix. 3.)

Thus *iactantia* and *contentio* are *filiae inanis gloriae* because they are means towards the manifestation of the personal superiority coveted by the vainglorious man. Once more, therefore, we seem to relapse into the old difficulty. For if an act is specified by its *finis*, why does not an act of *iactantia* count simply as *inanis gloria*? In one sense it certainly does: but we must remember that St. Thomas is discussing the abstract relation of one vice to another rather than the precise nature of an individual's act under particular circumstances. He means that if there were no *inanis gloria* there would be no *iactantia* or *contentio*; and if, too, these *filiae* are but subordinate manifestations of the mother-sin, the use of their names need never really clash with the principle that a sin is specified by its final cause. More difficult, perhaps, is the statement that *odium* is a *filia invidiae*. For *odium* we have found to be an ultimate condition of will, possible only when *invidia* and all other capital vices have ceased to act as motives. But St. Thomas only means that the passion of hatred can be excited by *invidia* long before steady and dispassionate hatred has mastered the will. As he says in one place:—

> odium ergo nascitur . . . ex invidia secundum quod eius bonum cui invidetur apprehenditur ut impeditivum propriae excellentiae. (*De Malo*, x. 3. ad 3.)

Hatred of this sort is at first only incidental, and *invidia* remains the dominant *finis*; but if, ultimately, the sinner progresses so far down the road of corruption that *odium* becomes an end in itself, the element of passion then vanishes and *invidia* will no longer be the *finis*.

All this ambiguity in the use of names springs from the fact, long familiar to us, that *peccatum* need mean no more than some visible and definable *actus inordinatus*. In that sense of the word, it would seem that every *peccatum* can be committed either *ex infirmitate* or *ex malitia*. Nevertheless, we may be satisfied, I believe, that the names of the capital vices always point to *infirmitas*; and if, at present, it has not been proved that the species of sin involving *malitia* can

also be named with accuracy, we must not conclude that the case is desperate. For the very fact that sins of *malitia* are altogether outside the capital vices has only been discovered in this chapter, and in the following pages I shall hope to show that they too can be named and classified in such a way as to reveal their true and inward nature.

CHAPTER XVI

MALITIA AND JUSTICE

HITHERTO I have not attempted to illustrate by a diagram the process of the argument relating to the vices. But now that our survey of the causes of sin is formally completed, the appended table will be useful, if only for the sake of emphasizing some difficulties which still remain:—

I *subiectum*	II *causa interior*	III *finis*	IV *obiectum*
intellectus	? ignorantia		
voluntas	malitia	odium superbia	malum per se, i. e. malum alienum
irascibilis	infirmitas (= passio)	(*a*) inanis gloria (*b*) ira, invidia	(*a*) bona animae (*b*) mala animae
concupiscibilis		(*a*) acedia (*b*) avaritia (*c*) gula, luxuria	(*a*) malum corporis (*b*) bona exteriora (*c*) bona corporis

It is to be observed that the sins named in the third column, under the head of *finis*, are placed in the diagram because they are final causes of other sins, not because I am pretending, as yet, to draw up a catalogue of vices classified relatively to their *subiecta* or *obiecta*. In a sense, no doubt, the names of the capital vices do cover all the sins *circa passiones*, but as for malicious sins, the vague appellations, *malum per se* and *malum alienum*, are a reminder that we have not yet completely satisfied ourselves that any species of *peccata* must be necessarily and always associated with deliberate intention. The result is

that our diagram contains practically no mention of any of the crimes and offences recognized in the statute-books of political societies. Society does not punish *invidia*, or *ira*, or *avaritia* in their proper character: it does not touch even *luxuria* except under circumstances special enough to turn the sin into something more than indulgence of carnal affections. In a word, the human judge looks not to any *finis*, but only to actual *nocumentum* done to members of the state.

Suppose, however, that we start now from the proposition that all sins must be acts opposed to some definite virtue—will this make it any easier to fit into a diagram, constructed as above, all the manifold sins which society does condemn and punish? And since there has been at least a suggestion that *homicidium*, *furtum*, and the rest of them, are morally speaking not committed except when *malitia* is their interior cause, let us confine ourselves, in this chapter, to inquiring whether malicious acts can all be grouped together in opposition to one or more particular vices. Remembering that all malicious sins are willed dispassionately, and that the *malum per se* which forms their object can only be *malum alienum*, we turn to the moral virtues and find that only one of them occupies the position demanded by the argument. Whether we are satisfied with the four cardinal virtues, or work upon Aristotle's longer list, it is manifest that Justice alone is *in voluntate sicut in subiecto*, that Justice alone is not *circa passiones*, and that Justice alone is primarily interested in securing *bonum alienum*. For each and all of these reasons we are almost compelled to infer that all acts caused by *malitia* must be classified as sins against Justice. And since this conclusion is, perhaps, more momentous than any yet put forward, I must be at some pains to explain its meaning.

Justice being only one among many moral virtues, the most natural objection will be that it is too narrow for the office now imposed upon it. For *malitia*, as signifying the corruption of will effected by long indulgence in passion, stands in the same relation to any one passion as to any other. Wherever a habit can be engendered, there *malitia* can become the interior cause of sinful acts. The *imperium* and responsibility of *voluntas*

penetrate the whole moral activity of man, and all acts originally *imperati a voluntate* may, at last, be *a voluntate eliciti*. Thus the range of *malitia* ought to be as wide as the whole range of the passions, and no one is likely to admit, at first sight, that all these legions of possible sins can be herded together as sins against one and the same virtue. And why, again, should it be that in sins against Justice the external expression of inward sin assumes a new importance? For I argued in the preceding chapter that a concrete act like theft does not rank as theft unless it be maliciously intended, and now I am suggesting that all malicious sins are *contra iustitiam*. Does this mean that Justice does, after all, consider the outward rather than the inward side of action?

Let us recall one or two striking facts about Justice. St. Thomas teaches that this greatest of moral virtues is dissociated from the passions in respect both of *subiectum* and *obiectum*. It inheres *in voluntate*, and, again, it is not, like all other moral virtues, *circa passiones*, but finds its *materia* or *obiectum* only in those external operations which involve the participation of at least two persons, and require the agent to observe a due *commensuratio ad alterum*. The occurrence of some visible *operatio* seemed, therefore, indispensable to the very existence of Justice and Injustice; but this doctrine, as we saw, is far from meaning that the guilt of Injustice can be incurred by the bare performance of an external act. For though the affections and passions are beyond the horizon of Justice, the effect of their disappearance is to make more room for *voluntas*, and no one *qui facit iniustum* is to be stamped as *iniustus* until it be proved that he acted *ex electione* (Ch. viii, p. 143). Justice, then, ought to be the widest of all virtues, because, wherever an *actus exterior* is possible, there the rights and interests of others besides the agent may be compromised and the principle of Justice must be brought into play. The range of Justice will thus be co-extensive with the external products of all the passions, but its function will remain distinct:—

operationes exteriores mediae sunt quodammodo inter res exteriores, quae sunt earum materia, et inter passiones in-

teriores, quae sunt earum principia. Contingit autem quandoque esse defectum in uno eorum sine hoc quod sit defectus in alio; sicut si aliquis surripiat rem alterius non cupiditate habendi sed voluntate nocendi; vel e converso, si aliquis alterius rem concupiscat quam tamen surripere non velit. Rectificatio ergo operationum, secundum quod ad exteriora terminantur, pertinet ad iustitiam; sed rectificatio earum, secundum quod a passionibus oriuntur, pertinet ad alias virtutes. (*S.* 2. 2. lviii. 9. ad 2.)

All external acts do or may stand in a relation *ad alterum*; hence Justice claims them all as its *materia*: yet only when passion is superseded by sheer *voluntas nocendi*, or, in other words, when the act is committed *ex malitia*, is there, in the full moral sense, a sin against Justice. Thus the same considerations which assure us that Justice will embrace all the acts which society regards as *peccata*, should also persuade us that external acts have in respect of Justice a prominence which, merely as consequences of disorderly passion, they cannot possess. In every virtue Reason imprints her *forma* on a special *materia*, and the *materia* of Justice is external operations. At the same time, it is only when the agent is moved by *malitia* that he can be counted guilty of the *peccatum* against society which, outwardly and visibly, he does commit. The connexion between *habitus* and *malitia* is also brought before us by St. Thomas:—

potest enim iniustificatio procedere quandoque quidem ex aliqua passione, puta irae vel concupiscentiae, quandoque autem ex electione, quando scilicet ipsa iniustificatio per se placet; et tunc proprie procedit ex habitu, quia unicuique habenti aliquem habitum est secundum se acceptum quod convenit illi habitui. (*S.* 2. 2. lix. 2.)

In short, the guilt of the actual *iniustificatio* is charged only to the *iniustus*; the *iniustus* is he who sins *ex malitia*; and *malitia* is the product of *habitus*.

At this point I must turn aside to take precautions against an error which might deceive us in the important matter of St. Thomas's dependence upon Aristotle. In the fifth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, almost the first concern of Aristotle is to distinguish a wider from a narrower form of Justice. Both

are essentially *ad alterum*, but, according to St. Thomas, the *comparatio ad alterum* is twofold :—

> uno modo ad alium singulariter consideratum ; alio modo ad alium in communi, secundum scilicet quod ille qui servit alicui communitati servit omnibus hominibus qui sub communitate illa continentur. (*S.* 2. 2. lviii. 5.)

Postponing the former kind of relation, he adds that the members of any community must count as parts of a whole, whence it follows that any *bonum* proper to the part must be *ordinabile in bonum totius.* Therefore :—

> secundum hoc, bonum cuiuslibet virtutis, sive ordinantis aliquem hominem ad seipsum, sive ordinantis ipsum ad aliquas alias personas singulares, est referibile ad bonum commune, ad quod ordinat iustitia. Et, secundum hoc, actus omnium virtutum possunt ad iustitiam pertinere, secundum quod ordinat hominem ad bonum commune. (Ibid.)

Justice of this kind is called *generalis* or *legalis*, and the point that needs, perhaps, some assertion is that the doctrine connecting *iustitia* and *malitia* together has nothing to do with this wider sense of Justice. At first sight, the words *actus omnium virtutum possunt ad iustitiam pertinere* are tempting, for they seem to promise as wide an extension of Justice as any theory could require. Yet the relation of the individual to the *bonum commune* is quite irrelevant to my own argument. I do not wish to prove that private virtue has always a public aspect, that virtues commonly said to be *ad seipsum* must also be *ad alterum.* My point is that acts which are *ad seipsum* so long as they flow from passion, become wholly *ad alterum* so soon as their source is *malitia* : and this contention can be made good in no way but by keeping closely to the *iustitia particularis* which ought to govern our behaviour to other men regarded primarily as individuals, not as parts of a political community. This particular Justice has its own limited *materia,* but we need not fear that it will prove too narrow to embrace all the sins which *malitia* can produce. For in view of the question, *utrum iniustitia sit vitium speciale,* St. Thomas constructs the objection :—

iniustitia opponitur omnibus virtutibus; nam quantum ad adulterium opponitur mansuetudini, et sic de aliis.

He does not take this objection as though it applied only to *iustitia generalis*, but answers:—

dicendum quod iniustitia etiam particularis opponitur indirecte omnibus virtutibus, inquantum scilicet exteriores etiam actus pertinent et ad iustitiam et ad alias virtutes morales, licet diversimode. (*S.* 2. 2. lix. 1. ad 2.)

No statement could exhibit more clearly both the nature and the vast extent of the *materia* upon which Justice desires to imprint her form. It will be convenient to remark here that the notion of *peccata mortalia ex genere* is more intelligible as applied to sins against Justice than in any other case. We have observed that capital vices and sins *circa passiones* are not necessarily mortal (Ch. xv, p. 258), and at an earlier stage (Ch. xi, p. 200) we were embarrassed by the thought that no *peccatum* in its external character could be generically mortal so long as it might issue from an excusable state of will. But no one should hesitate to accept the judgement of St. Thomas, that all sins properly opposed to Justice are mortal; for, in the first place:—

peccatum mortale est quod contrariatur caritati, per quam est animae vita. Omne autem nocumentum alteri illatum ex se caritati repugnat, quae movet ad volendum bonum alterius. Et ideo cum iniustitia semper consistat in nocumento alterius, manifestum est quod facere iniustum ex genere suo est peccatum mortale. (*S.* 2. 2. lix. 4.)

And secondly, if we are still inclined to reflect that the mortal character of sin is derived from the will's intention, we have only to remember that no sin is rightly defined as injustice unless *malitia* be its interior cause. The idea of mortal sin is always explained by reference to *caritas*, and since *caritas* is far wider than *iustitia*, we must not infer that only sins of injustice can be *mortalia ex genere*. But if we set aside, so far as possible, the theological aspect of mortal sin, Justice will hold among the moral virtues a unique position; for *peccata in alterum*, when malicious, are indubitably mortal, whereas *peccata in se* are not generically so, unless, indeed, we re-intro-

duce *caritas* and thus regard them as breaches of the *ordo ad Deum.*

Our general conviction that sins against Justice may easily be numerous enough to include all malicious sins will be greatly strengthened by St. Thomas's analysis of the virtue and the contrary vices. Like the other cardinal virtues Justice has many parts (Ch. viii, p. 152), and first I will touch upon the *partes subiectivae*—a term nearly equivalent to *species.* Aristotle divided Justice into τὸ διανεμητικόν and τὸ διορθωτικόν. In Latin these appear as *distributiva* and *commutativa* or, more fully, *directiva in commutationibus*, where *commutatio* stands for the Greek συνάλλαγμα. A private person, says St. Thomas, is compared with the community *sicut pars ad totum* —hence the claim of the state upon him—but the Justice relative to individuals is twofold, for :—

potest ad aliquam partem duplex ordo attendi: unus quidem partis ad partem; cui similis est ordo unius privatae personae ad alium: et hunc ordinem dirigit commutativa iustitia . . . alius ordo attenditur totius ad partes . . . quem quidem ordinem dirigit iustitia distributiva. (*S.* 2. 2. lxi. 1.)

The latter mode of Justice is not very productive in the matter of sins, but in view of the governing principle, *quod diversis personis diversa tribuuntur*, the person charged with the distribution may sin by neglecting the standard of worth by which he ought to be guided and allowing himself to be influenced by personal inclination or other irrelevant considerations. Many minor variations in the *peccatum* incidental to distribution will be possible, but the generic character of the sin will always be much the same, and the single term *acceptio personarum* is almost sufficient.

Commutationes are divided into voluntary and involuntary, and a subdivision of the latter is implied in the following description of them :—

involuntariae quidem quando aliquis utitur re alterius, vel persona, vel opere, eo invito : quod quidem contingit quandoque occulte per fraudem, quandoque etiam manifeste per violentiam. Utrumque autem contingit aut in rem, aut in personam propriam, aut in personam coniunctam. (*S.* 2. 2. lxi. 3.)

Postponing the voluntary *commutationes*, we arrive forthwith at a table of the crimes effected by violence and by fraud:—

occulte per fraudem		*manifeste per violentiam*
in personam propriam:—	(*a*) dolosa occisio, etc. veneni exhibitio (*b*) falsa testimonia detractiones, etc.	(*a*) manifesta occisio incarceratio verberatio mutilatio (*b*) accusatio in iudicio convicii illatio
in rem:—	furtum	rapina
in personam coniunctam:—	adulterium (servi seductio)	

One or two points, such as the status of suicide, will have to be discussed on a more suitable occasion, but otherwise this able of sins explains itself.

As to *commutationes voluntariae*, St. Thomas had to beware of a confusion which has hampered some more modern exponents of Aristotle. These voluntary transactions are not in themselves unlawful: they are legitimate forms of business, such as buying and selling, in which the presence of fraud is an occasional incident. There is a question, therefore, whether the difference between voluntary and involuntary transactions can have any effect upon the classification of sins opposed to commutative Justice. For if a transaction is legitimate in itself, does not the introduction of fraud by one of the parties simply mean that an *involuntary commutatio* takes place? And why should the fact that the crime appears within the sphere of lawful business make any difference? Where else, indeed, can fraud appear? St. Thomas does not raise this problem, but he has a special *quaestio* relating to frauds incidental to buying and selling, in course of which he says:—

dicendum quod fraudem adhibere ad hoc quod aliquid plus iusto pretio vendatur, omnino peccatum est, inquantum aliquis decipit proximum in damnum ipsius. Unde et Tullius dicit,

'tollendum est igitur in rebus contrahendis omne mendacium.' (*S.* 2. 2. lxxvii. 1.)

Now lying to your neighbour and wilfully deceiving him are assuredly cases of a *commutatio involuntaria.* Moreover, St. Thomas continues with the words *si autem fraus deficit,* and proceeds to argue the question about selling a thing for more than its worth on merely economic grounds. This *quaestio,* therefore, does not seem to produce any special class of sins, and we might dismiss all the *commutationes voluntariae* were it not for the special case of Usury. The Mosaic law condemned this practice, and Aristotle, too, supplied the verdict, *usuraria acquisitio pecuniarum est maxime praeter naturam* (*S.* 2. 2. lxxviii. 1. ad. 3); but Aristotle had not placed Usury among the involuntary transactions, and St. Thomas had, consequently, no option but to count it an abuse of a voluntary and legitimate contract. Lending is lawful, but lending under certain conditions, even though both parties accept them, is not. The 'subjective' parts of Justice thus yield three classes of sins:—

(*a*) All acts involving *acceptio personarum.*

(*b*) All the specified varieties of *commutationes involuntariae.*

(*c*) Usury, and *possibly* the frauds incidental to commerce.

The *partes integrales* (i. e. constituent elements in a just act) should properly come next, but as they cannot add to the list of *peccata,* we may pass straight on to the *partes potentiales.* These are nothing else but the secondary virtues attached to Justice, and St. Thomas reminds us that

> duo sunt consideranda: primo quidem, quod virtutes illae in aliquo cum principali virtute conveniant: secundo, quod in aliquo deficiunt a perfecta ratione ipsius. (*S.* 2. 2. lxxx. 1.)

Thus all virtues *ad alterum* will be annexed to Justice, but the subordinate virtue will fall short of the superior:—

> uno quidem modo, inquantum deficit a ratione aequalis: alio modo, inquantum deficit a ratione debiti. (Ibid.)

For example, one cannot make to God an equal return for what He gives: hence religious observance is but a defective kind of Justice. So again, there is the difference between

debitum legale and *debitum morale*. Justice proper looks for the former, but *gratia* and *affabilitas* render only the latter. St. Thomas then examines a number of authors, and out of Cicero, Macrobius, Andronicus Peripateticus, and others not mentioned by name, puts together a list of eight potential parts :—*religio*, *pietas*, *observantia*, *gratia*, *vindicatio*, *veritas*, *amicitia* (= *affabilitas*), and *liberalitas*.

The analysis of these virtues and of the opposing vices extends over some hundreds of pages of the *Summa*, but I shall notice only a small number of points. And first as to *religio*, we must understand that this is not a 'theological' virtue, comparable to *fides*, but a moral virtue including all duties connected with prayer, external worship, the taking of oaths, and so on. The opposing vices are *superstitio* (including *divinatio* by spurious astrology), *tentatio Dei*, *periurium*, *sacrilegium*, and *simonia*. *Religio* is followed by *pietas*, a virtue recognized on the principle :—

cum ad rationem iustitiae pertineat quod debitum alii reddat, ubi invenitur specialis ratio debiti alicui personae, ibi est specialis virtus. (*S.* 2. 2. ci. 3.)

We are bound to all men by the tie of Justice, but where consanguinity or citizenship or friendship creates a special bond, we need a special term to enshrine the obligation. *Observantia* and *gratia* are kindred virtues, and all those yet mentioned are linked together in the following statement :—

quia ergo non quicquid debemus Deo vel patri vel personae dignitate praecellenti debemus alicui benefactori a quo aliquid particulare beneficium recepimus, inde est quod post religionem . . . et pietatem . . . et observantiam . . . est gratia sive gratitudo, quae benefactoribus gratiam recompensat. (*S.* 2. 2. cvi. 1.)

Passing over *vindicatio*, which is of but slight importance, we come, lastly, to the three virtues, *veritas*, *affabilitas* (or *amicitia*), and *liberalitas*. The position of those virtues is uncertain (Ch. viii, p. 158), because, though obviously *ad alterum*, they all require a certain kind of *passio*, and, in this respect, belong to the *concupiscibilis*. The question now is whether the vices opposed to them are to be reckoned as mali-

cious and generically mortal sins against Justice, or as sins of infirmity caused by avarice or a foolish desire to please. No general answer can be satisfactory, and each must be inspected in turn.

(1) *Veritas* differs from *iustitia* because it does not render a *debitum legale*, and St. Thomas holds that the telling of the truth under any circumstances when Justice proper is at stake is no part of *veritas* (*Eth.* iv. 16). But what of the corresponding vices, and first of *mendacium*? A lie, says St. Thomas, may be *iocosum*, prompted only by the wish to please; or *officiosum*, as when it aims at utility; or *perniciosum*, as when the hurt of others is intended. Only the last species is really a grave offence, and when St. Thomas would know whether a lie is *peccatum mortale*, he decides that

> ratione vero finis intenti aliquod mendacium contrariatur caritati: puta quod dicitur aut in iniuriam Dei, quod semper est peccatum mortale, utpote religioni contrarium: aut in nocumentum proximi, quantum ad personam, divitias, vel famam; et hoc etiam est peccatum mortale, cum nocere proximo sit peccatum mortale. Ex sola autem intentione peccati mortalis aliquis mortaliter peccat. (*S.* 2. 2. cx. 4.)

A lie, in fact, is mortal sin in so far as it can be treated as a sin against Justice. *Veritas* is a virtue *ad seipsum*, because it means personal genuineness, nor (in view of the distinction between *legale* and *morale*) is it ever the same as Justice: but the sin of lying becomes mortal only when *iniuria* is the *finis*. Much the same is true of *hypocrisis*, another sin opposed to Truth. It, too, can be either venial or mortal:—

> quod discernendum est ex fine: qui si repugnat caritati Dei vel proximi erit peccatum mortale: puta cum simulat sanctitatem ut falsam doctrinam disseminet, vel ut adipiscatur ecclesiasticam dignitatem indignus . . . . (*S.* 2. 2. cxi. 4.)

So, again, the Aristotelian *iactantia* becomes mortal if employed *ad proximi deceptionem et damnum* (*S.* 2. 2. cxii. 2). *Ironia* is also mentioned in this context, but St. Thomas scarcely counts it a mortal sin.

(2) The position of *affabilitas* is very similar. The most notable sin here is *adulatio*. Flattery can be mortal if it leads

to praising wickedness, or if it proves an occasion of stumbling, but most unmistakably is it mortal—

ratione intentionis, puta cum quis alicui adulatur ad hoc quod fraudulenter ei noceat vel corporaliter vel spiritualiter. (*S.* 2. 2. CXV. 2.)

Besides the flatterer, there is the *litigiosus qui superabundat in contristando*, and he sins mortally when he attacks the truth or throws contempt upon one who proclaims it.

(3) *Liberalitas* differs from Justice because it consists *in affectu dantis* and also:—

quia iustitia exhibet alteri quod eius est, sed liberalitas exhibet quod suum est. (*S.* 2. 2. CXVII. 5.)

But there is a difficulty connected with *liberalitas* which neither *veritas* nor *affabilitas* brings before us. I have made it a vital part of my interpretation of St. Thomas that none of the capital vices can be caused by *malitia*, and now I am arguing that all sins (unless theological) caused by *malitia* ought to rank as *contra iustitiam*. But if *liberalitas* is a part of Justice, and if *avaritia* is opposed to *liberalitas*, my contentions seem to be shaken. In point of fact, however, the instance is valuable as affording a clear proof that the capital vice called *avaritia* can neither be technically opposed to Justice nor caused by a malicious will. St. Thomas was influenced here by a curious and interesting fact about the Latin translation of Aristotle's *Ethics*. When Aristotle wished to separate *iustitia particularis* from *iustitia generalis*, he named πλεονεξία as the infallible mark of the former (*Eth. Nic.* v. 1129. a. 32). Now the Latin translation of this word is *avaritia*, and the verb πλεονεκτεῖν is rendered by *avare facere*. St. Thomas adopts these terms in every place where he refers to the characteristic mark of unjust acts; with the result that *avaritia* becomes the essence of *all* sins against Justice and cannot possibly remain merely one out of a number of vices, every one of which is, in some special way, *contra iustitiam*. Nor is St. Thomas disturbed by the fact that *avaritia* is undoubtedly the name of one of the capital vices; for though tradition obliges him to use that name, he maintains that the Aristotelian

word for the capital vice was not *avaritia* but *illiberalitas*. The strongest statement is in the *De Malo*:—

oportet considerare quod circa possessiones vel pecunias consistit et iustitia et liberalitas; aliter tamen et aliter. . . . Quidam ergo loquuntur de avaritia sicut de opposito liberalitatis; et secundum hoc avaritia importat quemdam defectum circa emissiones pecuniarum et quamdam superfluitatem circa acquisitionem et retentionem earum in superfluo amore pecuniarum. Philosophus vero loquitur de avaritia sicut de opposito iustitiae; et secundum hoc avarus dicitur qui recipit vel retinet aliena contra debitum iustitiae. Liberalitati enim opponit non avaritiam sed illiberalitatem. (*De Malo*, xiii. 1.)

In point of fact, the Latin version does give *illiberalitas* for ἀνελευθερία (*Eth. Nic.* iv. 1119. b. 27, &c.), but this fact was not enough in itself to prevent St. Thomas from constantly employing *avaritia* as the name of the vice opposed to *liberalitas*. The question is, however, whether the capital vice is the Aristotelian *illiberalitas* or the Aristotelian *avaritia*, and for St. Thomas the only possible answer was that *illiberalitas*, the sin of appetite, not *avaritia*, the sin of *voluntas*, was capital. Look first at the problem, *utrum avaritia semper sit peccatum mortale*. St. Thomas replies:—

avaritia dupliciter dicitur: uno modo secundum quod oponitur iustitiae; et hoc modo ex genere suo est peccatum mortale; sic enim ad avaritiam pertinet quod aliquis iniuste accipiat vel retineat res alienas; quod pertinet ad rapinam vel furtum, quae sunt peccata mortalia. . . . Alio modo potest accipi avaritia secundum quod opponitur liberalitati, et secundum hoc importat inordinatum amorem divitiarum. Si ergo intantum divitiarum amor crescat quod praeferatur caritati, ut scilicet propter amorem divitiarum aliquis non vereatur facere contra amorem Dei et proximi, sic avaritia erit peccatum mortale. Si autem inordinatio amoris intra hoc sistat . . . sic avaritia erit peccatum veniale. (*S.* 2. 2. cxviii. 4.)

No one will doubt, I suppose, that the latter *avaritia* (= *illiberalitas*) is the capital vice. For like all the other capital vices, the inordinate love of riches is essentially a sin of the *appetitus inferior*, mortal when it causes mortal sins, but not generically mortal because always malicious. Herein it

differs clearly from the sins opposed to *veritas* and *affabilitas*, which become mortal only when the injury of others is deliberately intended. The illiberal man *peccat eligens*, but the liar and the flatterer (when their sin is mortal) *peccant ex electione*. Lastly, in answer to the question, *utrum avaritia sit vitium capitale*, St. Thomas says:—

> vitium capitale dicitur ex quo alia vitia oriuntur secundum rationem finis, qui cum sit multum appetibilis propter eius appetitum homo procedit ad multa facienda vel bona vel mala Finis autem maxime appetibilis est beatitudo vel felicitas. . . . Est autem una de conditionibus felicitatis ut sit per se sufficiens. . . . Sed per se sufficientiam maxime repromittunt divitiae . . . et ideo avaritia, quae consistit in appetitu pecuniae, est vitium capitale. (*S.* 2. 2. cxviii. 4.)

Such a description of *avaritia* could not possibly apply to the *avaritia* inherent in all acts of Injustice; nor can we form any other conclusion but that *illiberalitas* (the capital vice) is essentially distinct from malicious πλεονεξία. *Liberalitas*, no doubt, is a *pars iustitiae*, but the opposing vice does not belong to the same rank or class as sins properly *contra iustitiam*.

Our understanding of Justice will also be increased by noting the close relation of this virtue to the Decalogue. In the arrangement of the *Secunda Secundae* St. Thomas attaches certain *praecepta* to each of the theological and cardinal virtues. The *praecepta* are the injunctions of the *lex divina*, revealed first to Moses, and afterwards, more perfectly, in the Gospel. Now the *praecepta* of Justice are simply the Ten Commandments:—

> praecepta Decalogi sunt prima principia legis et quibus statim ratio naturalis assentit, sicut manifestissimis principiis. Manifestissime autem ratio debiti quae requiritur ad praeceptum apparet in iustitia, quae est ad alterum . . . et ideo praecepta Decalogi oportuit ad iustitiam pertinere. (*S.* 2. 2. cxxii. 1.)

The arrangement of the Decalogue is shown to follow exactly the lines indicated in the order of the first four 'potential parts' of Justice. The special obligations of *religio* and *pietas* come first (i. e. the commandments relating to God and parents), and after these:—

necesse fuit quod ponerentur consequenter aliqua praecepta pertinentia ad iustitiam proprie dictam, quae indifferenter omnibus debitum reddit. (*S.* 2. 2. cxxii. 6.)

St. Thomas adds that, although only one sin is mentioned in each of these later *praecepta*, the one must always be taken as representative of a class. In this way, every kind of hurt to our neighbour, in respect of *persona*, *res*, and *personae coniunctae*, is forbidden in the prohibitions of homicide, theft, and adultery; and every kind of lie or slander in the prohibition of false testimony (ibid. ad 2). The precepts against covetousness need some attention and are not free from difficulty. In them, says St. Thomas:—

non intelligitur prohiberi primus motus concupiscentiae, qui consistit intra limites sensualitatis; sed prohibetur directe consensus voluntatis qui est in opus vel in delectationem. (Ibid. ad 3.)

Now the *consensus voluntatis* is necessary before any sin, sensual or otherwise, can be culpable; but the manifest intention of these precepts is to forbid the inward willing of *iniuriae* (thou shalt not covet thy *neighbour's* wife, &c.), and we must not imagine that sins of the lower appetite suddenly intrude themselves into the Decalogue. Yet the more we insist that coveting the property of others is itself an *iniuria*, the more difficult does it seem to uphold the doctrine that Justice is always *circa actus exteriores*. The apparent exception is, however, most valuable, and will enable us finally to dismiss the idea that the occurrence of an *actus exterior* is sometimes indispensable. For even with Justice the whole *culpa* lies in the *actus interior*, and St. Thomas can say, for instance:—

quoad Deum sola voluntas facit simoniacum: sed quoad poenam ecclesiasticam exteriorem non punitur ut simoniacus. (*S.* 2. 2. c. 6. ad 6.)

Nevertheless, we need retract nothing of what was previously asserted concerning the relation of Justice to external operations. For the real principle of the distinction between Injustice and all sins caused by passion is that, in the latter, the outward and concrete *iniuria* is never to be regarded as the *finis*, while in all genuine acts of Injustice the *finis*

does always lie in the *iniuria* itself. Thus if *A* desires money for the sake of *gula*, and does actually take another man's purse; while *B* intends to rob another because he hates him, but fails to carry out his scheme; common parlance would affirm that *A* had committed theft, while *B* had not; but, on the principle of St. Thomas, *A* is guilty of *gula* and *B* is guilty of *furtum*; and this is why Justice and Injustice are always *circa operationes exteriores*, though, at the same time, it matters nothing whether the *operatio* be actually accomplished or not.

If my diagnosis of *malitia* and *iniustitia* is not erroneous, I believe that we may claim now to have realized the hope that St. Thomas would ultimately reconcile the outward and inward standards of judgement in such a way that even the names of sins must carry with them the imputation of a certain degree of culpability. For (1) the capital vices are final causes to which all sins of passion can be reduced, (2) the *iniuriae* tabulated and classified by St. Thomas are *fines* implying *malitia* in the agent, and, so far as we can judge at present, no moral sins except *iniuriae* can be malicious. Hence, though colloquially one must use names like *homicidium* and *furtum* simply to denote certain concrete acts, a moral philosopher will not apply those names to the acts of any individual unless he knows that the intention was malicious, or, in other words, that *iniuria* was the *finis*. He will never forget the principle expressed in the words:—

> in actu fornicationis quae propter furtum committitur est quidem fornicatio sicut materiale, furtum vero sicut formale. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxv. 4.)

I cannot doubt, however, that students of Aristotle will be seriously troubled by this peculiar collocation of *malitia* and *iniustitia*. For who, after reading the *Nicomachean Ethics*, would infer that all habitual sins and all caused by προαίρεσις must be sins of Injustice in its most particular sense? For that matter, one may venture to doubt whether St. Thomas himself completely grasped the consequences of his own argument. Not only does he never (I believe) declare openly that all acts done *ex malitia* must be acts of injustice, but

I shall try to show almost immediately that there is, in theory, a type of sinner whose sin is habitual without being Injustice. Nevertheless, St. Thomas did arrange his premisses in such a way that only one conclusion seems possible; and there are, too, very forcible reasons for connecting his doctrine of malicious sin with the fifth book of Aristotle's *Ethics*. The remarkable distinction between *eligens* and *ex electione* rests on the phrase ἐκ προαιρέσεως, which Aristotle introduces nowhere (I think) except in his fifth book, and in a context where it follows, as a matter of course, that all sins done *ex electione* will be genuine acts of Injustice. Moreover, if *voluntas* and *passio* absolutely exclude each other, and if *iustitia* alone among the moral virtues is *in voluntate sicut in subiecto*, one would be puzzled to construct in theory a sin committed *ex electione* which could be anything but some species of Injustice. That a man should dispassionately plot a carnal act one can easily imagine, but can it then rank as an act of *luxuria*? Must it not rather become an *iniuria* to man or an act of contempt towards God? The conception of a passionate act done *ex malitia* is self-contradictory, and the moment the act ceases to be referred to passion what else can it be but one of the *operationes* which are the *materia* of Justice?

But let us examine some passages from the Commentary on the *Ethics*, and, first of all, one that illustrates the nature of *iustitia particularis*:—

> contingit quandoque quod aliquis absolute adulterium committat, propter concupiscentiam, non quidem ut lucretur, sed magis apponit de suo et in rebus suis patitur iacturam. Talis proprie videtur esse luxuriosus, per se loquendo, quia vitium luxuriae proprie ordinatur ad satisfactionem concupiscentiae. Ille autem qui moechatur ut accipiat de alieno non videtur esse luxuriosus, per se loquendo, quia non intendit luxuriae finem: sed magis videtur esse iniustus quia propter lucrum contra iustitiam fecit. Sic ergo patet quod iniustitia est quaedam specialis malitia. (*Eth.* v. 3.)

It is interesting here to see St. Thomas himself falling into ambiguity, for, strictly speaking, *adulterium* is an *iniuria* and not a case of *luxuria*. His point, however, is clearly this, that

where there is no *avaritia*, there is no *iniustitia*; and he implies no less clearly that the *luxuriosus per se*, since he acts *propter concupiscentiam*, does not sin *ex malitia*. But is not the reasoning which dismisses the *luxuriosus* from the class of malicious sinners equally fatal to all other sinners except the *iniustus* himself? Let us, however, conclude nothing too hastily, but examine next the use of the term *malitia* in the Commentary on the fifth and seventh books.

In the passage quoted above, St. Thomas calls Injustice a *malitia specialis*, to be distinguished, as we read in the same context, from *malitia irae* or *malitia timiditatis*. That is to say, Injustice is one vice, Anger another, and so on; nor does *malitia* appear to be used in the sense of an interior *cause*—for an act of Anger or Timidity cannot be an act caused by *malitia*. Yet, as the argument develops, St. Thomas tends to restrict *malitia* to the sense of perfect wickedness, such as mere passion cannot produce: and wherever this tendency is manifest there is an association of the terms *iniustus* and *malus* so intimate as to make them appear almost synonymous. For example, when Aristotle asks *quis sit vere dicendus iniustus*, he first distinguishes *ex passione* from *ex electione* in the usual way, and then says of those who sin through passion:—

> iniustum faciunt quidem et iniustificationes sunt, non quidem iniusti propter hoc neque mali; neque enim propter malitiam nocumentum. Quando autem ex electione iniustus et malus. (*Nic. Eth.* v. 1135. b. 23–25.)

And St. Thomas adds:—

> faciunt quidem iniustum, et actus eorum sunt iniustificationes: non tamen propter hoc ipsi sunt iniusti et mali, quia non inferunt nocumentum propter malitiam, sed propter passionem. (*Eth.* v. 13.)

It is easy to argue that the conjunction of *iniustus* and *malus* is merely the natural effect of the context, and not a proof that all *mali* are *iniusti*: but look, again, at another passage, where St. Thomas is discussing Aristotle's judgement that *iniustum facere* is worse than *iniustum pati*:—

> quod quidem probat per hoc quod iniustum facere est vituperabile et cum malitia: quod quidem intelligendum est

vel de malitia perfecta et simpliciter, puta cum aliquis iniustum facit non solum voluntarie sed ex electione; vel se proxime habet ad perfectam malitiam, ut patet de eo qui iniustum facit non ex electione sed ex ira vel alia passione. (*Eth.* v. 17.)

Again, one might contend that *iniustitia* is merely one example of *malitia perfecta*, not the essential form of it; but I believe that, after a careful study of the Commentary, most people will feel that St. Thomas does repeatedly come to the verge of implying that nothing but deliberate Injustice can be pure *malitia*. Nor is evidence lacking in other works, and one statement is too remarkable to be omitted. St. Thomas quotes from Aristotle the proposition, *pusillanimus non est malus* (a loose quotation of *Nic. Eth.* iii. 1125. a. 18), and says:—

Philosophus illos nominat malos qui proximis inferunt nocumenta: et secundum hoc pusillanimus dicitur non esse malus, quia nulli infert nocumentum, nisi per accidens. (*S.* 2. 2. cxxxiii. 1. ad 1.)

Now if this be in truth the correct meaning of *malus*, the difference between *malus* and *iniustus* is negligible. But I should not care to insist too much upon a single statement, and it will be better to return to the *Ethics*.

The seventh book does not deal directly with Justice, but the nature of *malitia*, as compared with *incontinentia* and *bestialitas*, is the principal topic. The road would have been easier for St. Thomas if Aristotle had used no term but κακία to denote the state of habitual badness; but, as it happens, κακία, μοχθηρία, πονηρία, and ἀκολασία are all in the same position as regards the comparison with *incontinentia*. The Latin version has *malitia* for each of the first three words, but renders ἀκόλαστος by *intemperatus*. Now *intemperantia* we should expect to mean habitual badness in respect of the vices (*gula* and *luxuria*) opposed to *temperantia*; and thus, in fact, there does appear the paradoxical figure of a sinner who is *luxuriosus*, or *gulosus*, *ex malitia*. Paradox or no paradox, however, St. Thomas is quite untroubled. He accepts the *intemperatus* without criticism, and observes that

malitia, scilicet intemperantia, assimilatur illis aegritudinibus

quae continue insunt homini . . . et hoc ideo quia intemperantia et quaelibet malitia est continua. Habet enim habitum permanentem per quem eligit mala. Sed incontinentia non est continua . . . et sic incontinentia est quasi quaedam malitia non continua. (*Eth.* vii. 8.)

We must not infer from the opening words that *intemperantia* is a loose synonym for *malitia perfecta*, for the ensuing words *intemperantia et quaelibet malitia* render such an opinion untenable; and there seems to be no escape from the fact that St. Thomas authorizes here the notion of deliberate and habitual sin which is not a species of Injustice. Nevertheless, Injustice returns again, even in this same book, with the same pretensions, for in the exposition of *Nic. Eth.* 1152. a. 15 ff. we read:—

quia incontinens ante passionem habet bonam electionem . . . sequitur quod sit ex media parte malus, inquantum scilicet vult malum, et non sit iniustus vel malus simpliciter, quia non est insidiator quasi ex consilio et electione agens malum. (*Eth.* vii. 10.)

Aristotle's use of ἄδικος here may have been accidental (1152. a. 17), but to St. Thomas *iniustus* was a word of definite and technical meaning, and surely he almost identifies it with *malus*? Still, one may continue to hold that all *iniusti* are *mali simpliciter*, without admitting the truth of the converse; and, not to wrangle further over the evidence, I will state what I believe to be the truth.

I believe, then, that, if we start from the interior causes of sin and search for the species of sin corresponding to them, we can declare with certainty, (1) that all sins produced by *passio* are formally reducible to the seven capital vices, (2) that all sins technically opposed to Justice are caused by *malitia*. But in addition to these two great classes of sin, I think St. Thomas requires us to acknowledge the existence of an *intemperatus ex malitia*, whose sin is neither *luxuria*, in the proper sense, nor yet a species of *iniustitia*. Of such a man it is said that

ex habituali dispositione aestimat delectationes corporales per se esse eligendas. (*Eth.* vii. 8.)

That is to say, he permanently takes for his *ultimus finis*

something which never ought to be an end in itself, and to do this can transform even a venial sin into a mortal one:—

contingit quandoque quod id quod est peccatum veniale ex genere, ratione sui obiecti, fit mortale ex parte agentis, vel quia in eo constituit finem ultimum, vel . . . etc. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxxviii. 2.)

How to describe this type of sinner I do not know. His sin is not theological (the part played by Aristotle in the matter is enough to prove this), but, remembering that sin is mortal when it is *contra dilectionem Dei vel proximi*, we shall probably be right in asserting that the habitual pursuit of the wrong *finis* is primarily *contra dilectionem Dei.* For God is Himself the true *ultimus finis*, and a sort of *contemptus Dei* is implied in the choice of any other. A good Aristotelian will think, perhaps, that the *intemperatus ex malitia* represents exactly Aristotle's idea of habitual sin, but a student of St. Thomas will be more disposed to argue that the dispassionate pursuit of a *finis* which consists in carnal acts is a psychological impossibility. One may even suggest that, if Aristotle had kept entirely to κακία and left ἀκολασία out, the *intemperatus ex malitia* would never have appeared in the pages of St. Thomas. But we must take the facts as we find them and recognize the sin of choosing a wrong *finis* as something outside both the capital vices and the *iniuriae* caused by *malitia.*

CHAPTER XVII

ARISTOTLE AND THE CAPITAL VICES

THE diagram at the beginning of the previous chapter did not pretend either to supply a catalogue and classification of vices or to exhibit the correspondence between vices and virtues. Considerable progress has been made in the former respect, but the parallelism or opposition between good habits and bad has gone no further than the obvious example of Justice and Injustice. The chief questions that remain to be asked are—(1) whether there are any special vices opposed to *prudentia*, (2) whether the capital vices can be so arranged as to show which of them are directly opposed to which moral virtues. The latter question is the more important, and I shall prefer to translate it into the form indicated by the title of this chapter. One might, no doubt, simply run through a certain section of the *Summa* and ascertain that such and such capital vices are opposed to such and such virtues; but since St. Thomas has succeeded in bringing Aristotle's list of virtues into harmony with other lists, compiled, for the most part, on the basis of four cardinal virtues, it will be more interesting to inquire how far the capital vices are recognized and included in the list of vices mentioned in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. In one sense, neither Aristotle nor any other ancient philosopher can be said to authorize either the general notion of a capital vice or the special list accepted by St. Thomas and so many other Christian writers. Yet previous experience should dissuade us from anticipating a complete failure to connect Aristotle with any important part of St. Thomas's moral system; and, since the capital vices are moral rather than theological, we may assume without argument that Aristotle did survey the whole province of moral evil which those seven vices are

supposed to cover. It does not follow that he recognized them all by the same names, but it is antecedently improbable—if we judge by the standards of St. Thomas—that he would utterly have omitted any one of them unless good reasons for the omission can be offered.

Two of the simplest facts about the capital vices are that they are all rooted in the *appetitus sensitivus*, and that they can all be derived from the threefold division of good things into *bona corporis*, *bona exteriora*, and *bona animae*. Now Aristotle also, if we accept the interpretation of St. Thomas, allots different virtues to the different forms of sensual appetite; and though the account of *bona* and *mala* in the *Ethics* is rather complicated, St. Thomas does not seem to doubt that Aristotle's virtues could be adapted to the three classes mentioned above. Let us start, then, from the fact that all Aristotle's virtues, except Justice, inhere either in the *irascibilis* or in the *concupiscibilis*. Those virtues are ten in number, and since, by the doctrine of the Mean, there are twice as many vices as virtues, there must be twenty Aristotelian vices whose total content is identical with that of the capital seven. If the seven are not lurking somewhere among Aristotle's twenty vices *circa passiones*, they must be absent altogether. But before we begin to inspect the twenty vices, I think there will be no difficulty in reducing their number:—

(1) The three social virtues at the end of Aristotle's catalogue have only the most dubious right to be classed with the other virtues of appetite. That two of them are afterwards turned into parts of Justice is not a decisive fact—for the same thing is true of *liberalitas*—but we have satisfied ourselves that the sins contrary to *veritas* and *affabilitas* cannot well be mortal except when they are deliberate *iniuriae*. As to *eutrapelia*, St. Thomas is consistent in always associating it with *temperantia*, but when mortal sin is seen *in superfluitate ludi*, this is either because the *iocandi genus* is wrong in itself—

> quando scilicet utitur aliquis causa ludi turpibus verbis, vel factis, vel etiam his quae vergunt in proximi nocumentum, quae de se sunt peccata mortalia. (*S.* 2. 2. clxviii. 3.)

or, sometimes, because the fault lies in the use of pleasantry at the wrong place or time:—

et hoc quidem quandoque potest esse peccatum mortale propter vehementiam affectus ad ludum; cuius delectationem praeponit aliquis dilectioni Dei. (Ibid.)

In the former case the sin is nearly, if not quite, an *iniuria*: in the latter, we are reminded rather of the *intemperatus ex malitia* (p. 288); for when a man is so set upon *ludus* as to make it an end in itself, his sin ceases to be *circa passiones*, but cannot be called Injustice to other men. The fault lies in the preference of a certain *finis* to the love of God. The opposite extreme of *defectus ludi* St. Thomas does not appear to regard as mortal sin, and, on the whole, we shall be justified in removing the sins opposed to *eutrapelia* from the class of sins *circa passiones*, though not altogether for the same reason that leads to the omission of sins contrary to *veritas* and *affabilitas*. Ten virtues are thus reduced to seven, and twenty vices to fourteen.

(2) St. Thomas follows Aristotle in recognizing two virtues *circa honores* and two *circa pecunias*, but when he comes to enumerate the corresponding vices there are not found to be eight distinct species. The sins of excessive ambition (*praesumptio* and *ambitio*) and the sin of defect (*pusillanimitas*) are all opposed to *magnanimitas* (*S.* 2. 2. cxxxii. 2). So with the sins relating to the use of money, those distinctively opposed to *magnificentia* seem to be less than mortal:—

illiberalitas attenditur circa communes sumptus: parvificentia autem circa magnos sumptus, quos difficilius est facere; et ideo minus vitium est parvificentia quam illiberalitas. Unde Philosophus dicit quod 'quamvis parvificentia et vitium oppositum sint malitiae, non tamen opprobria inferunt; quia nec sunt nocivae proximo nec sunt valde turpes'. (*S.* 2. 2. cxxxv. 1. ad 3.)

Corrupt transliterations of Greek words prevented St. Thomas from understanding *βαναυσία*, but this does not affect the main point. No real objection can be taken to the omission of one virtue *circa honores* and one *circa pecunias*, and when this is accomplished Aristotle's twenty vices come down to ten. These it will be convenient to tabulate thus:—

defect	*mean*	*excess*
timiditas	fortitudo	audacia
insensibilitas	temperantia	intemperantia
illiberalitas	liberalitas	prodigalitas
pusillanimitas	magnanimitas	praesumptio
defectus irae	mansuetudo	excessus irae

(3) But the process of reduction is not yet finished. Aristotle himself observes that one extreme may well be more culpable than the other, and St. Thomas is not slow to avail himself of the hint. *Insensibilitas* practically disappears from a list of mortal sins (*S.* 2. 2. cxlii. 1), and the case of *defectus irae* is similar. It is true that *defectus motus ad puniendum secundum iudicium rationis* can be a serious sin (*S.* 2. 2. clviii. 8), but then it ceases to be *circa passiones*, and should, perhaps, be opposed to *vindicatio*, one of the parts of Justice. *Audacia*, again, is less grave than Cowardice, and St. Thomas lays little stress upon it (*S.* 2. 2. cxxvii). I do not, however, propose to exclude a sin merely because it is less culpable than the opposite extreme; for *prodigalitas* is in this position, yet: —

> prodigus peccat in seipsum dum bona sua consumit unde vivere deberet: peccat etiam in alterum consumendo bona ex quibus aliis deberet providere. (*S.* 2. 2. cxix. 3. ad 1.)

In the latter aspect, Prodigality may easily pass into positive fraud, but, for the present, we shall do well to retain it in our list of sins connected with passion. *Pusillanimitas* also (which St. Thomas illustrates by the parable of the servant who buried his one talent) should retain its place, and we gather from a remark in *S.* 2. 2. cxxxiii. 1. ad 2, that it might be mortal. I think, however, that the omission of *insensibilitas*, *defectus irae*, and *audacia* will give rise to no misunderstanding; and in that case we arrive finally at a list of seven Aristotelian sins whose total content should be identical with that of the seven capital vices. The coincidence of number is, I need hardly say, irrelevant, for it has been produced only by expelling several of Aristotle's vices for the sake of simplicity. The two lists are these:—

Aristotle.	*Capital Vices.*
timiditas	luxuria
intemperantia	gula
illiberalitas	avaritia
prodigalitas	acedia
praesumptio	ira
pusillanimitas	invidia
excessus irae	inanis gloria

The Aristotelian vices are here written down merely in the order of their actual occurrence in the *Nicomachean Ethics*; but now I must turn aside to ask whether that order is significant. Of the original intention of Aristotle nothing need be said, but there is little doubt that St. Thomas supposed him to be advancing gradually from the least to the most important virtue. To begin with, there was the solid fact that Justice, admittedly the most excellent of all, came last in the list; while, secondly, the two virtues standing first were admittedly concerned with the lowest parts of man's moral nature. Nor, speaking generally, did St. Thomas doubt that Aristotle began with virtues relative to *bona corporis*, passed thence to *bona exteriora*, and concluded with *bona* (or *mala*) *animae*. Nevertheless there were serious objections to the belief that the order of progress from lower to higher was steady and unbroken. Consider, for example, the position of *fortitudo*. This virtue stands first of all in Aristotle's list, and on the principle of *maiori virtuti maius vitium opponitur* (*S.* 1. 2. lxxiii. 4), the vices opposed to it should be the least culpable of all. On the other hand, *fortitudo* is the cardinal virtue of the *irascibilis*, and therefore, by another accepted principle, ranks higher than *temperantia*, the virtue of the *concupiscibilis*. St. Thomas, indeed, states unequivocally that *fortitudo* is the greater of the two (e. g. in *S.* 2. 2. cxxiii. 12): consequently, the sins contrary to it ought to be *more* culpable than Intemperance. Moreover, *magnificentia*, *magnanimitas*, and other virtues are parts of *fortitudo*; but since a cardinal virtue is superior to all those subordinated to itself, *timiditas* ought to be more heinous than, for instance, the Pride or Presumption opposed to *magnanimitas*. Here, then, is a desperate tangle,

which can only be unravelled by reviving some earlier impressions of *fortitudo*.

The fact is that St. Thomas needs both a physical and a spiritual *fortitudo*, just as he needed both higher and lower forms of concupiscence. As a follower of Aristotle, he insists upon the limitations of *fortitudo* prescribed in the *Ethics*, and thus makes the virtue relative primarily to bodily evils, of which the greatest is death:—

ad virtutem fortitudinis pertinet ut voluntatem hominis tueatur, ne retrahatur a bono rationis propter timorem mali corporalis. . . . Maxime autem terribile inter omnia corporalia mala est mors, quae tollit omnia corporalia bona. (*S.* 2. 2. cxxiii. 4.)

And so of *timiditas* or *timor* he says:—

timor praecipuus est periculorum mortis. Et ideo talis timoris inordinatio opponitur fortitudini, quae est circa pericula mortis. (*S.* 2. 2. cxxv. 2.)

For courage in respect of moral or spiritual evils we have to go to subordinate parts of *fortitudo*, such as *patientia* or *perseverantia*. In all this St. Thomas is chiefly influenced by the undeniable fact that Aristotle had allied *fortitudo* closely with *temperantia*, on the ground that these were virtues of the irrational quasi-animal part of the soul, and concerned with bodily goods or ills. But when he thought of *fortitudo* as the cardinal virtue of the higher division of sensual appetite, boasting subordinate parts as refined as *magnanimitas*, and relative to *bona animae*, St. Thomas must have found it extremely difficult to imagine that the *fortitudo* of Aristotle's *Ethics* could fulfil the functions required of it. We cannot be surprised, then, if the status of the vices opposed to *fortitudo* is dubious. The direct question, *utrum timiditas sit maius peccatum quam intemperantia*, is propounded, and St. Thomas names a variety of reasons which prove that *intemperantia* is the worse of the two (*S.* 2. 2. cxlii. 3). Such a verdict is defensible, if at all, on none but the Aristotelian ground, that *timiditas* is relative to physical terrors. In so far as *fortitudo* is a higher kind of virtue than *temperantia*, the only possible opinion is that vices opposed to the higher virtue are worse

than those opposed to the lower. Again, if a cardinal virtue is greater than any of its parts, the vices directly opposite to the cardinal virtue ought to be the worst of their own group. Yet *magnanimitas* is a part of *fortitudo*, and one of the vices opposed to *magnanimitas* is *inanis gloria*, which we know to be the gravest of all sins belonging to the sensual appetite. The artificiality of the attempt to follow Aristotle in this matter is proved by the fact that, despite the pains spent on defining it, *timiditas* practically disappears from all the more serious discussions of sin, and *fortitudo* is for St. Thomas, as for all writers penetrated by Christian thought, the moral courage which enables men to persevere in high endeavours and to endure wounds inflicted in the struggle.

It is possible that the position of *mansuetudo* in Aristotle's catalogue was also a little difficult for St. Thomas. Some doubt, indeed, had been felt in ancient times, and in the *Eudemian Ethics* this virtue follows *temperantia*, as though a virtue regulating a primitive passion would naturally precede those implying the existence of more elaborate social relations. For some reasons, St. Thomas would be very well satisfied with the place assigned to *mansuetudo* in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. The Latin version has *ira* for both θυμός and ὀργή, and some of the passages treating of θυμός had encouraged the belief that Aristotle had recognized the *irascibilis* as a faculty more rational and spiritual than the *concupiscibilis*. From this point of view, the virtue and vices *circa iram* would naturally come late in the list. Nor would it be a very weighty objection that *magnanimitas*, at least, ought to have come after *mansuetudo*, inasmuch as *inanis gloria* was unquestionably a graver sin than *ira*. For St. Thomas regarded this as a mere question of Aristotle's convenience:—

> postquam Philosophus determinavit de virtutibus respicientibus bona exteriora . . . hic determinat de mansuetudine quae respicit exteriora mala. (*Ethics*, iv. 13.)

To treat first of all the virtues relative to *bona* would be natural enough, even though *magnanimitas* were greater than *mansuetudo*. But the real difficulty is that St. Thomas eventually turns *mansuetudo* into a *pars temperantiae*. This

he does on the dubious ground (cf. Ch. viii, p. 157) that identity of *modus* counts for more than similarity of *materia*. Now the *modus* of Courage

> consistit . . . in animi quadam firmitate ; temperantiae autem in quadam refrenatione. . . . Clementia autem et mansuetudo similiter in quadam refrenatione consistunt . . . et secundum hoc ponuntur partes temperantiae. (*S.* 2. 2. clvii. 3.)

This may be very true, but the result is that Aristotle has to be very judiciously handled ; for if his order of the virtues meant anything, it certainly did not suggest that *mansuetudo* was a part of Temperance. Perhaps the truth is that the term *mansuetudo* expresses only half of what is wanted, and the half most suggestive of *refrenatio*. When anger is defined as *appetitus vindictae*, we see that there must be a right kind of desire for retribution ; but this is not what is commonly understood by *mansuetudo*. In any case, we may be satisfied that the position of *ira* (or *excessus irae*) in Aristotle's *Ethics* was not really inconsistent with its position in the order of capital vices. Allowing, therefore, for the double aspect of *fortitudo*, St. Thomas might easily believe that Aristotle's general intention was to begin with the least important virtues and vices and advance by degrees to the greatest.

Returning now to compare the more important Aristotelian vices with the capital seven, we perceive at once that four of the latter are acknowledged in the *Ethics*. For *intemperantia* splits up into *luxuria* and *gula* (St. Thomas always assumes this), *illiberalitas* is the capital *avaritia*, and *excessus irae* is the same as *ira*. Nor is there any real doubt about *inanis gloria*. St. Thomas was hampered a little by the bad transliterations of χαυνότης (*caumotes* and *chapnotes* are found), but the general character of the presumptuous man was clear to him. Aristotle, indeed, had not fastened any special infamy upon this sin, and had suggested that the opposite extreme, *pusillanimitas*, was more reprehensible : but for St. Thomas the gravity of *praesumptio* was magnified by its resemblance to *inanis gloria* and by the proximity of *superbia*. He endeavours formally to admit that *pusillanimitas* is the worse of the two, but adds that *praesumptio dicitur esse nequissima*

ratione superbiae, ex qua procedit (*S.* 2. 2. cxxxiii. 2. ad 4). In the *Summa* we find that *praesumptio* is not literally identified with *inanis gloria*, but that both vices (along with *ambitio*) are *magnanimitati opposita per excessum*. Thus Presumption is a kind of travesty of *magnanimitas*:—

sicut magnanimitas, ita et praesumptio in aliquod magnum tendere videtur. Non enim multum consuevit dici aliquis praesumptuosus si in aliquo modico vires proprias transcendit. (*S.* 2. 2. cxxx. 2. ad 2.)

And again:—

sic patet quod praesumptuosus secundum rei veritatem quandoque deficit a magnanimo, sed secundum apparentiam in excessu se habet. (Ibid. ad 3.)

Describing *inanis gloria* itself, St. Thomas quotes from Cicero (*De Officiis*, i. § 68), but borrows also from Aristotle's account of *magnanimitas*:—

dicendum quod hoc ipsum magnitudini animi quod aliquis res modicas tantum appretietur quod de eis glorietur. Unde dicitur de magnanimo quod ei sit honor parvus (*Nic. Eth.* iv. 1124. a. 16., &c.) . . . similiter etiam magnitudini animi repugnat quod aliquis de his quae non sunt glorietur; unde de magnanimo dicitur quod magis curat veritatem quam opinionem . . . (*S.* 2. 2. cxxxii. 2. ad 1.)

In another work, *superbia* and *inanis gloria* are both opposed to Magnanimity, and Aristotle is mentioned:—

nullus potest esse magnanimus nisi virtuosus, qui est habilis ad magna: et propter hoc etiam Philosophus dicit quod magnanimitas est ornamentum omnium virtutum.

and therefore:—

inanis gloria et superbia sunt opposita magnanimitati, quia inanis gloria non tendit in id quod est magnum simpliciter . . . superbia vero tendit in magnum simpliciter, sed non secundum proportionem suam. (*Sent.* ii, D. xlii, q. ii. 4.)

There remain only two capital vices, *invidia* and *acedia*, and it will be best to assert at once that no skill or sophistry can discover either of these among the Aristotelian vices. The two vices, however, are far from standing in the same position relatively to Aristotle. *Invidia* was almost as familiar

to him as to St. Thomas, but of *acedia* he had never heard. The cases must be taken separately, and *invidia* first.

When Aristotle first runs over the list of virtues (*Nic. Eth.* ii. 7), he concludes with a notice of certain *medietates in passionibus et in his quae circa passiones*, and among these is *nemesis*, defined as *medietas invidiae et epicacotharchiae*, which last word St. Thomas pertinently explains by the statement, *tharcus enim dicitur gaudens*. Now if ever there was a chapter at the end of the fourth book enlarging upon *nemesis* and its opposites, it has disappeared, and St. Thomas can only say, *de his alibi dicitur, scilicet in secundo Rhetoricae* (*Eth.* ii. 9). St. Thomas has left no Commentary on the *Rhetoric*, but he has used its resources abundantly, and his general conception of *invidia* as *tristitia de bono alieno* is thoroughly Aristotelian. The proximity to *inanis gloria* is also connected with Aristotle:—

bonum alterius aestimatur ut malum proprium, inquantum est diminutivum propriae gloriae vel excellentiae . . . et ideo praecipue de illis bonis homines invident in quibus est gloria et in quibus homines amant honorari et in opinione esse, ut Philosophus dicit. (*S.* 2. 2. xxxvi. 1.)

The allusion is to *Rhetoric*, ii. 10, and St. Thomas has drawn freely upon that chapter. Nevertheless, there remained the fact that Aristotle had not allowed to *invidia* the formal status of a vice, and this was inconvenient to a mediaeval philosopher because *invidia* (unless absorbed by *inanis gloria*) was one of the capital vices. St. Thomas does actually raise the objection:—

omne peccatum mortale alicui virtuti contrariatur: sed invidia non contrariatur alicui virtuti sed cuidam passioni quam Philosophus nemesim vocat.

The answer is:—

quamvis misericordia et nemesis passiones videantur secundum rationem tristitiae, tamen secundum quod supervenit electio rationis accipiunt rationem virtutis. (*De Malo*, x. 2. ad 8.)

No doubt it would have been the extreme of pedantry to withhold the name of *vitium* from *invidia* on the ground of

loyalty to Aristotle; yet the fact remarked in the above 'objection' was not without consequences. For when St. Thomas had reduced all virtues to the three theological and four cardinal, he pledged himself also to oppose all the vices to one or other of these seven, but then it appeared that *invidia* could not be set opposite to any moral virtue, and St. Thomas had recourse to *caritas*. The result is somewhat anomalous, for *invidia* is a vice *circa passiones*, and yet it has to be opposed directly or primarily to a theological virtue. In any case, it is not an insignificant fact, that if you had to draw up a list of vices, on condition that each one should be opposed to an Aristotelian virtue, you could not include *invidia*.

The exotic character of *acedia*, as compared with the other capital vices, becomes more and more apparent as St. Thomas defines it with greater precision. Very often he is satisfied with the words *tristitia de bono spirituali*, and sometimes *acedia* is reduced almost to the bodily toil attendant upon all higher forms of ambition. But when accuracy is important, we read that

> non potest dici quod sit speciale vitium acedia, inquantum refugit spirituale bonum, prout est laboriosum vel molestum corpori . . . quia hoc etiam non separaret acediam a vitiis carnalibus, quibus aliquis quietem et delectationem corporis quaerit. (*S.* 2. 2. xxxv. 2.)

Continuing, St. Thomas observes that all lesser goods of the spirit lead up to

> unum spirituale bonum, quod est bonum divinum, circa quod est specialis virtus, quae est caritas. (Ibid.)

Now when *acedia* is defined as *tristitia de bono divino, de quo caritas gaudet*, it becomes preposterous to search for it in Aristotle's *Ethics*; nor can I find that St. Thomas himself ever makes the slightest attempt to discover this vice anywhere in Aristotle's philosophy. Aristotle had taught that *tristitia* could be morally wrong; he had even observed that all vice must involve *tristitia de quibus non oportet*: but the same reasons that left *caritas* beyond his vision ensured the absence of *acedia*. It is, perhaps, because *acedia* and *invidia* are directly opposed to Charity that they, more easily than the

other capital vices, can be styled *mortalia ex genere*. The others can be mortal in their more theological aspect, as being *contra Deum*, and in one place St. Thomas maintains that *luxuria* is generically mortal because it must always be a *peccatum in proximum* (*De Malo*, xv. 2. ad 4): but in that case *luxuria* is converted into an *iniuria* and ceases to be one of the *peccata in se*. This, however, is not the usual account of *luxuria*, and in any case *invidia* and *acedia* are on a special footing, because their essential opposition to Charity makes them essentially and always mortal.

The seven most important moral vices of Aristotle thus include only five of the capital vices. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that St. Thomas was dissatisfied with Aristotle's account of the moral virtues and vices: rather, he seems, by connecting the two missing vices with *caritas*, to remove Aristotle from the competition. Yet we cannot forget that all the capital vices belong to the *appetitus inferior*, and that Aristotle's vices (except *iniustitia*) are supposed to occupy the same province.

Suppose now that we cross over to the other side, and inquire whether the capital seven include all the vices that Aristotle had placed in the front rank. One cannot pretend, I think, that the true Aristotelian *timiditas* is provided for, nor *pusillanimitas*, nor yet *prodigalitas*. But actual omissions are less important than the general reflection that Aristotle's doctrine of the Mean finds no recognition in the theory or catalogue of the capital vices. An Aristotelian might say, if he pleased, that any capital vice must imply the condemnation of its opposite, but the notion of a capital vice does not really warrant any such assertion, and assuredly there is not between any two of the actual seven the kind of antithesis that Aristotle remarks between, for instance, *avaritia* and *prodigalitas*. On the other hand, it would be too much to say that the subordination of all sins *circa passiones* to seven specified vices made it impossible to introduce Aristotle's doctrine. St. Thomas himself experiences no difficulty in the matter. Without assuming, therefore, that there is any antagonism between Aristotle and the theory of capital vices, we still shall do well

to note (1) that neither of the vicious extremes opposed to Aristotle's *fortitudo* is capital, (2) that in respect of *temperantia*, *liberalitas*, *magnanimitas*, and *mansuetudo*, only one of the extremes is included in the orthodox seven.

The whole of this recent discourse upon Aristotle has been part of our attempt to work out the correspondence between vices and virtues which is postulated by their common relation to the faculties of the soul and to certain *obiecta*. With the same end in view, we must now touch briefly upon the vices opposed to *prudentia*. Prudence is an element in all moral virtue, and *imprudentia* is diffused in the same way through all the vices:—

sicut enim prudentia participatur quodammodo in omnibus virtutibus . . . ita et imprudentia in omnibus vitiis et peccatis. (*S.* 2. 2. liii. 2.)

Nevertheless, St. Thomas rules that Imprudence is a *peccatum speciale*, and proceeds to name two groups of vices, the one opposed to the 'potential' parts of the virtue, the latter consisting rather in spurious imitations of it. In the former class are *precipitatio*, *inconsideratio*, *inconstantia*, and *negligentia*: in the latter, *prudentia carnis* and *astutia*, with the subordinate *dolus* and *fraus*. All these vices have some degree of individuality, and yet, like culpable ignorance, they are not easily separated from the accompanying defects of will. *Negligentia* as intellectual is inseparable from *negligentia* as laziness (Ch. xiii, p. 238); and when it is urged that *fraus* belongs to *iniustitia* or *illiberalitas* rather than to a vice contrary to *prudentia*, St. Thomas gives an answer which holds good of all such vices:—

executio astutiae potest fieri per aliquod aliud vitium, sicut et executio prudentiae fit per virtutes; et hoc modo nihil prohibet defraudationem pertinere ad avaritiam vel illiberalitatem. (*S.* 2. 2. lv. 5. ad 2.)

And again, of the vices pretending to be Prudence, he says:—

praecipue inter alias virtutes morales usus rationis rectae apparet in iustitia . . . et ideo usus rationis indebitus etiam maxime apparet in vitiis oppositis iustitiae: opponitur autem

ipsi maxime avaritia. Et ideo praedicta vitia maxime ex avaritia oriuntur. (*S.* 2. 2. lv. 8.)

Clearly, then, the vices technically opposed to Prudence could easily be fused with those contrary to other virtues, especially *iustitia*. Sometimes the intellectual side of fraud or worldly wisdom or even negligence is uppermost, sometimes the appetitive: but the less these vices are isolated, the easier it is to avoid awkward questions about their relation to the interior causes, *passio* and *malitia*.

I propose to conclude this chapter with two diagrams. The first will merely add two columns to the diagram of p. 269, and slightly amplify the others: the second will aim chiefly at displaying the relation of Aristotle's virtues and vices to the seven capital vices. The first, then, will be as follows:—

I *subiecta*	II *virtutes*	III *causa interior*	IV *vitia*	V *fines*	VI *obiecta*
nt. speculativus					
nt. practicus	prudentia	? ignorantia negligentiae	negligentia, etc. astutia, fraus, etc.		
oluntas	iustitia	malitia	iniustitia	odium superbia malum alienum	iniuriae
rascibilis	fortitudo	infirmitas	inanis gloria invidia ira ?	inanis gloria invidia ira	bona animae mala animae
oncupiscibilis	temperantia	infirmitas	acedia avaritia gula luxuria	acedia avaritia gula luxuria	mala corporis bona exteriora bona corporis

The following notes may be useful:—

(1) For reasons advanced in this chapter, I mark as doubtful (in column iv) the position of *ira* relatively to *fortitudo*.

(2) *odium*, &c., are given as the final causes of Injustice, in

order to preserve those aspects of malicious sin, but the single word *iniuriae* might be written, as representing (*a*) the various sorts of Injustice, (*b*) the *finis*, and (*c*) the *obiectum* of all such sins. In malicious sin the *iniuria* itself is both *finis* and *obiectum*.

The second diagram requires only three columns :—

I *Aristotle's Virtues*	II *Aristotle's Vices*	III *Capital Vices*
fortitudo	(audacia) timiditas	—
temperantia	intemperantia (insensibilitas)	luxuria gula
liberalitas	illiberalitas prodigalitas	avaritia
magnanimitas	praesumptio pusillanimitas	inanis gloria
mansuetudo	excessus irae (defectus irae)	ira

The total omission of some of Aristotle's virtues and vices, and also of two capital vices, has been explained earlier in this chapter. The less grave among the Aristotelian vices I have enclosed in brackets.

CHAPTER XVIII

SINS AGAINST THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES

THE examination of Faith, Hope, and Charity in an earlier chapter proved that the moral and theological views of conduct were not so discrepant as to call for any changes in psychology. The potentiality of the human soul for good and evil was not wholly revealed to Pagan philosophers, but the Christian edifice of character rests upon the same foundations of intellect, will, and passion as Aristotle and other profane authorities had described. *Fides*, indeed, emerged into prominence, because its *subiectum* was the *intellectus speculativus*, but, for the most part, the *virtutes infusae* appeared to be only a spiritualized reproduction of the *virtutes acquisitae*. Similar results will naturally be expected in the matter of the vices, but we cannot be certain, without inspection, that the theological way of regarding sin will produce no results of importance.

To begin, then, with *fides*, St. Thomas distinguishes genuine *infidelitas* from mere absence or negation of faith. Virtuous pagans are not condemned *propter infidelitatis peccatum*, but *propter alia peccata quae sine fide remitti non possunt* (*S.* 2. 2. x. i). The sin of *infidelitas* proper is not imputed to them, any more than to unbaptized infants, but only to such as had a chance of becoming *fideles*. Infidelity is a sin of the speculative intellect, *sed moti a voluntate* (*S.* 2. 2. x. 2). That is to say, it is 'elicited' by the intellect, but, as with all sins, the assent of the will is necessary before *culpa* can exist. Whether this intellectual sin is to be associated with *malitia* or with *infirmitas*, St. Thomas does not inquire. Of the subordinate species of *infidelitas* the most notable is *haeresis*; and because this word in itself means almost the same as *electio*, a sugges-

tion is made that *voluntas* rather than *intellectus* should be the *subiectum*. But St. Thomas, while allowing that Heresy, like *electio*, touches, not the *finis*, but *ea quae sunt ad finem* (i. e. the faith is corrupted but not denied), still insists that the sin is seated in the intellect, and, for that reason, distinct from Schism (*S.* 2. 2. xi. 1). *Apostasia*, again, is slightly different, but need not detain us. *Blasphemia* I shall prefer to reserve for a later section of this chapter, partly because the gravest kind of blasphemy, the *peccatum in Spiritum Sanctum*, is a special case; partly because it is not certain that all varieties of the sin can rightly be opposed to *fides*.

The vices contrary to *spes* are only two in number, *desperatio* and *praesumptio*. Both terms signify here less than their English equivalents, for both apply only to the attitude of sinners towards the hope of everlasting glory. The *subiectum* of *spes*, in its theological sense, is *voluntas*, and *desperatio*, therefore, need not involve *infidelitas*:—

> aliquis retinendo in universali veram aestimationem fidei, quod scilicet est remissio peccatorum in Ecclesia, potest tamen pati motum desperationis, quod scilicet sibi in tali statu existenti non sit sperandum de venia . . . (*S.* 2. 2. xx. 2.)

Being relative to the *bonum arduum divinum*, the state of despair is most commonly caused by *acedia*; but this we must understand to be true only in the sense that *odium* is caused by *invidia* (Ch. xv, p. 263). Repeated indulgence in *acedia* will at last produce *desperatio* (*S.* 2. 2. xx. 4), but it would be a complete inversion of the facts to suppose that a sin of desperation could have *acedia* as its *final* cause. The sin of *desperatio* is thus distinct from all moral sins in so far as the idea of *bonum arduum* is theologically considered; but *spes* and *desperatio* do not enjoy the same marked isolation as *fides* and *infidelitas*.

Praesumptio consists in unreasonable confidence concerning the same hope that *desperatio* abandons. As we know already, the term is used to denote a sin resembling *inanis gloria*, and opposed to *magnanimitas*: the difference being that the morally presumptuous man has inordinate faith in his own qualities, while the theological version of the same sin is

unreasonable confidence in the Divine Mercy, as though God would extend His indulgence to those who persist in evil ways and despise the help of the Spirit (*S.* 2. 2. xxi. 1). Again, the moral sin *manifeste ex inani gloria procedit;* but the theological—

> videtur oriri directe ex superbia, ac si ipse tanti se aestimet quod etiam eum peccantem Deus non puniat vel gloria excludat. (*S.* 2. 2. xxi. 4.)

The distinction between *inanis gloria* and *superbia* is here the point of interest.

The numerous sins opposed to *caritas* will be more easily classified if we glance first at the list of *actus caritatis.* The primary act is *dilectio*, but St. Thomas names also *gaudium*, *pax*, *misericordia*, *beneficentia*, *eleemosyna*, and *correctio fraterna.* In point of fact, *misericordia* is afterwards said to be a *virtus* rather than an *actus*, and there is this importance in the technical distinction, that the doctrine of Aristotle is thereby emended, and for the same reason that transformed *invidia* from a culpable passion into a vice. St. Thomas observes that *misericordia* is opposed to *nemesis* (cf. Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, ii. 1386. b. 9), as one laudable passion may be opposed to another, but the kind of *contrarietas* that exists between good and evil is seen in the fact that *proprie misericordiae opponitur invidia* (*S.* 2. 2. xxx. 3. ad 2). This he repeats in another place, and adds a reason :—

> invidus enim tristatur de bono proximi ; misericors autem tristatur de malo proximi. (*S.* 2. 2. xxxvi. 3. ad 3.)

In Aristotle's *Ethics*, *misericordia* occurs in a list of passions, but it is even more remote than *nemesis* from being a virtue. Hence the direct antagonism between *invidia* and *misericordia* is a fresh reason for believing that in the sin of Envy there is something not wholly intelligible to a Pagan philosopher.

Besides *invidia*, the sins opposed to the various acts of Charity are *odium*, *acedia*, *discordia*, *contentio*, *schisma*, *bellum* (not always sinful), *rixa*, *seditio*, *scandalum.* *Odium*, as the gravest of all, is opposed to *dilectio* itself. *Acedia* conflicts with *gaudium*, and is, in its essence, a culpable kind of

tristitia. Any sinner (the *luxuriosus*, for instance, when deprived of his pleasure) may display *tristitia de quibus non oportet*, but only the *acediosus* and (in another way) the *invidiosus* sin by being sad at what ought especially to cause them joy (*S.* 2. 2. xxxvi. 2). *Invidia*, however, is opposed, as we have seen, to *misericordia* rather than to *gaudium*, for *bonum proximi* is distinct from *bonum divinum.*

Of the seven remaining vices six are opposed to *pax.* Four of these can be passed over, but a few words on *schisma* and *seditio* will not be wasted. The Schismatic sins chiefly against the spiritual unity of the Church :—

et ideo proprie schismatici dicuntur qui propria sponte et intentione se ab unitate Ecclesiae separant, quae est unitas principalis. (*S.* 2. 2. xxxix. 1.)

Schism thus resembles Heresy in that its operation lies within the limits of the Church, but the difference is plain :—

nam haeresis per se opponitur fidei, schisma autem per se opponitur unitati ecclesiasticae caritatis. (Ibid. ad 3.)

Hence, as lack of Faith implies lack of Charity, while the converse is not true, so every Heretic is a Schismatic, but not every Schismatic is heretical.

Seditio is not unlike *schisma*, but St. Thomas names two points of difference, of which the more important is that

schisma opponitur spirituali unitati multitudinis, scilicet unitati ecclesiasticae; seditio autem temporali vel saeculari multitudinis unitati. (*S.* 2. 2. xlii. 1. ad 2.)

Seditio being thus an offence against civil society, St. Thomas declares it to be always mortal sin, for—

manifestum est quod seditio opponitur et iustitiae et communi bono; et ideo ex suo genere est peccatum mortale, et tanto gravius quanto bonum commune est maius quam bonum privatum. (*S.* 2. 2. xlii. 2.)

The reference to *bonum commune* shows that the Justice here intended is *iustitia generalis* or *legalis*; and this is interesting, because it prompts us to ask whether St. Thomas has made any distinct provision for moral sins against the State. He does not appear to recognize any separate class of such sins, and, despite the mention of *iustitia*, *seditio* remains

a sin opposed to *caritas*. So with Suicide (which will recur in a later chapter), St. Thomas accepts the Aristotelian doctrine, that self-murder is an injury to the State, but he also reckons it as *contra caritatem*, and as damnable for that reason.

The one vice remaining is *scandalum*, which is opposed, in a broad sense, to *beneficentia*, but more particularly to *correctio fraterna*. Any word or deed *praebens occasionem spiritualis ruinae* is a scandal, but the special quality of the sin is discovered when

aliquis suo inordinato dicto vel facto intendit alium trahere ad peccandum: et sic ex intentione specialis finis sortitur rationem specialis peccati. (*S.* 2. 2. xliii. 3.)

Any other sins opposed to *beneficentia*, or to *eleemosyna*, appear to take the character of sins against Justice (or possibly *liberalitas*), and scarcely involve a reference to a theological virtue.

Having thus briefly reviewed the sins opposed to each of the three theological virtues, we can proceed to compare them with each other in respect of *gravitas*, selecting as typical examples *infidelitas*, *desperatio*, and *odium*. Now St. Thomas, as it happens, bestows the title of *maximum peccatorum* on each one of these three, not out of sheer carelessness or inconsistency, but in each case from a special point of view. Thus *infidelitas* is called the greatest of sins because through it *maxime homo a Deo elongatur*, but herein St. Thomas is comparing it only with moral sins:—

manifestum est quod peccatum infidelitatis est maius omnibus peccatis quae contingunt in perversitate morum. Secus autem est de peccatis quae opponuntur aliis virtutibus theologicis, ut infra dicetur. (*S.* 2. 2. x. 3.)

Passing on, therefore, to *desperatio*, we read:—

maius peccatum est, secundum se loquendo, non credere Dei veritatem, vel odio habere Deum, quam non sperare consequi gloriam ab ipso. Sed si comparetur desperatio ad alia duo peccata ex parte nostra, sic desperatio est periculosior, quia per spem revocamur a malis et inducimur ad bona prosequenda. (*S.* 2. 2. xx. 3.)

Lastly, we arrive at *odium Dei*, the sin that is greatest without any qualifications :—

Ipsa infidelitas non habet rationem culpae nisi inquantum est voluntaria . . . quod autem sit voluntaria provenit ex hoc quod aliquis odio habet veritatem quae proponitur . . . et ideo sicut causa est potior effectu ita odium Dei est maius peccatum quam infidelitas. (*S.* 2. 2. xxxiv. 2. ad 2.)

Desperatio, indeed, is not mentioned here, and though its inferiority to *odium Dei* is indisputable, one might, perhaps, argue that because *desperatio* is *in voluntate*, while *infidelitas* is *in intellectu*, the former should be the more culpable. But the truth seems to be that *spes* and *desperatio* are *in voluntate* only because there was a technical objection to placing any theological virtue *in irascibili*, and St. Thomas was not greatly interested in the status of *desperatio*, so long as he proved that *infidelitas* was less grave than *odium*.

In what sort of relation, if any, do the theological stand to the capital vices? The latter belong to the *appetitus inferior*, the former to *intellectus* and *voluntas*, but we must not conclude immediately that the two types of sin are wholly disconnected. We find, for instance, an 'objection', that *infidelitas* cannot be a sin, because it cannot be reduced to any of the capital vices. In a certain sense (despite our reflections upon malicious *iniuriae*) every *peccatum morale* can be reduced to one of the seven, but theological vices are another matter, and St. Thomas answers :—

infidelitas, secundum quod est peccatum, oritur ex superbia; ex qua contingit quod homo intellectum suum non vult subicere regulis fidei et sano intellectui Patrum: unde Gregorius dicit quod 'ex inani gloria oriuntur novitatum praesumptiones'. Quamvis potest dici quod sicut virtutes theologicae non reducuntur ad virtutes cardinales, sed sunt priores eis; ita etiam vitia opposita virtutibus theologicis non reducuntur ad vitia capitalia. (*S.* 2. 2. x. ad 3.)

The sense of *superbia* must here be equivalent to that of *inanis gloria*—or the quotation from Gregory would be pointless—but the latter portion of St. Thomas's statement inclines to the opinion that, strictly speaking, no theological sin is caused by one of the capital vices. On the other hand, some

connexion between *infidelitas* and *superbia* is undeniable, and the capital vice will intrude itself whenever the technical distinction between *superbia* and *inanis gloria* is ignored. There are other senses in which a theological vice can be caused by a capital vice, as when, for instance, *odium* is caused by *invidia* (*S.* 2. 2. xxxiv. 6); but in such cases cause does not mean *finis* (see p. 263). I think, then, that any further difficulties about theological and capital vices can be merged in the general question to which the whole of this chapter has been pointing—I mean the question as to how far the total system of theological vices can be superimposed upon the moral without losing its own identity.

Suppose, then, that we were to imitate our former procedure, and, starting from the common psychological basis, were to fit the sins against theological virtues into a diagram constructed primarily for the exhibition of moral vices. What would be the result? In the first place, *infidelitas* would certainly be as prominent among the vices as was *fides* among the virtues; for it alone (with the subordinate *haeresis* and *apostasia*) claims the *intellectus speculativus* for its *subiectum*, and thus has no true parallel among the vices known to Aristotle or to any other secular philosophy. After this one instance, however, it becomes far less easy to differentiate theological and moral vices. In *desperatio* we may freely admit there is something beyond the ken of Pagan speculation —something which justifies the technical metamorphosis of a passion into a vice. Yet the step from *spes* and *desperatio* to virtues and vices opposed to *fortitudo* of the higher kind is never a very long one, and the class of *bona ardua* is almost elastic enough to include the *bonum arduum divinum*. With *praesumptio* the loss of the theological quality would be still easier, for here there is a moral vice with an identical name. Once more, the supreme sins against *caritas* are *odium Dei* and *odium proximi*, and the intrusion of *odium* into the argument relating to malicious sins has shown already that this sin cannot be treated as purely theological. Whoever intends deliberately to injure his neighbour is making *odium* his *finis*, and, so far, *iniustitia* and *caritas* are coincident. The sinful-

ness of hatred, no doubt, is vastly magnified when the full nature of *caritas* is revealed, and perhaps one may say, too, that *odium Dei* is always more theological than *odium proximi*, inasmuch as the external aspect of the sin is less prominent. Yet there are *iniuriae* to God (i. e. the sins against *religio*) as well as to man, and it will be, for the most part, in the plotting of *iniuriae* that all kinds of *odium* will be manifested. Of the minor sins against Charity, the majority could very well be embraced by moral philosophy. *Schisma* is a special case of faction, because it assumes the existence of an ecclesiastical society; and *scandalum*, too, has a Christian flavour which an Aristotle or a Cicero could not perfectly anticipate; but no one, I imagine, will insist that these two vices, or any of those involving strife and discord, are too theological to be represented in terms of moral philosophy.

There still remains the vexed question of *acedia* and *invidia*, which, formally, are opposed to Charity. All that I now wish to add to the observations of the previous chapter is that Charity, though it be the *forma* of all virtues, has a special resemblance to Justice. When, therefore, St. Thomas opposes *invidia* and *acedia* to Charity, which aspect of the virtue has he in mind? The question is not unreasonably subtle, for if two capital vices are opposed to *caritas* as to the spiritualized form of *iustitia*, then indeed are those two cut off from the remaining five. But, manifestly, this cannot be so. An act done *propter invidiam* or *propter acediam* can never be a genuine and malicious *iniuria*. Envy is said to be *contra bonum proximi*, but the same is said of *avaritia* (*illiberalitas*) and *ira*, and none of these vices is for a moment to be confused with *iniustitia*. The right conclusion is that *invidia* and *acedia* are opposed to Charity, when we reflect (*a*) that *ratio diligendi proximum Deus est*, (*b*) that the crown of all spiritual goods is eternal salvation; but though the *obiectum* of either vice (especially *acedia*) receives this theological illumination, we cannot, on the whole, refuse to treat them as vices of the *appetitus inferior*, or to class them with the other capital vices.

The sin of Blasphemy has been reserved till now because the gravest form of it, *blasphemia contra Spiritum Sanctum*,

raises a new problem and reveals a new way of estimating the chief types of sin. Our Lord's declaration that sin against the Holy Spirit should never be forgiven had led to much curiosity and dispute; for the nature of the sin was left doubtful, and the doctrine that repentance could always lead to forgiveness seemed to be impugned. St. Thomas mentions three kinds of interpretations: the ancient views before Augustine, the doctrine of Augustine himself, and a modern opinion, *secundum dicta magistralia quae non sunt contemnenda* (*De Malo*, iii. 14). The ancient school understood our Lord to refer to the accusation that He cast out devils by the help of Beelzebub: St. Augustine argued that nothing could be beyond forgiveness except *finalis impoenitentia*, and supposed the Holy Spirit, as the special author of *remissio peccatorum*, to be especially blasphemed by impenitence: the modern school (to which one may say that St. Thomas belonged) taught that each Person of the Trinity had a peculiar attribute and that to blaspheme the Holy Spirit was to sin *contra appropriatum bonum Spiritui Sancto*:—

> Spiritui Sancto appropriatur bonitas sicut et Patri appropriatur potentia, et Filio sapientia. Unde peccatum in Patrem dicunt esse quando peccatur ex infirmitate; peccatum autem in Filium quando peccatur ex ignorantia; peccatum autem in Spiritum Sanctum quando peccatur ex certa malitia.
>
> (*S.* 2. 2. xiv. 1.)

The identification of sins against the Holy Spirit with sins of *malitia* will, however, deceive us if we do not remember that a sin can be caused by *malitia* without being habitual (Ch. xiii, p. 226). It was, in fact, on account of the *peccata contra Spiritum Sanctum* that St. Thomas declined to admit that *malitia* must always spring from *habitus*. Habit does produce *electio mali*, but so does the removal of any one of the gifts of the Spirit, and only in view of the latter fact can *peccare ex malitia* be identified with *peccare contra Spiritum Sanctum* (*S.* 2. 2. xiv. 1). The chief reason for insisting upon this point was that tradition had handed down a list of six specific sins against the Holy Spirit, whereas:—

> peccatum ex certa malitia, secundum quod provenit ex

inclinatione habitus, non est speciale peccatum sed quaedam generalis conditio peccati. (Ibid. ad 3.)

Nor would it be a sufficient answer, that all moral sins caused by *malitia* must take the form of *iniuriae*; for the traditional sins against the Spirit were not modes of Injustice, but bore the names *desperatio*, *praesumptio*, *impoenitentia*, *obstinatio*, *impugnatio veritatis agnitae*, and *invidentia fraternae gratiae*. The first two have already been opposed to *spes* (hence the difficulty of making this kind of blasphemy a sin against *fides*), and the second two, we must notice, are not general conditions of will but specific sins. Apart from these points, the details are unimportant, and we need direct our attention only to the wider question, as to how far St. Thomas does really stop short of identifying sins against the Holy Spirit with sins maliciously performed.

Christianity teaches nothing with greater assurance than that no sin is, in this world, past forgiveness. Yet penitence is the condition of forgiveness, and this was why Augustine urged that the irremissible sin could be nothing else but *finalis impoenitentia*. St. Thomas rejects this interpretation, but is thereby compelled to modify our Lord's pronouncement (Matth. xii. 32) and put upon it a sense not perfectly literal. Sin, he says, can be unpardonable in two ways:—

uno modo quantum ad poenam: qui enim ex ignorantia vel infirmitate peccat, minorem poenam meretur; qui autem ex certa malitia non habet aliquam excusationem unde eius poena minuatur. . . . Alio modo potest intelligi quoad culpam; sicut aliquis dicitur morbus incurabilis secundum naturam morbi . . . ita etiam peccatum in Spiritum Sanctum dicitur irremissibile secundum suam naturam, inquantum excludit ea per quae fit remissio peccatorum. Per hoc tamen non praecluditur via remittendi et sanandi omnipotentiae et misericordiae Dei. (*S.* 2. 2. xiv. 3.)

So again, in the *De Veritate*, we are told that the *liberum arbitrium* of devils and the damned becomes *obstinatum in malo*, but upon man, while yet *in statu viae*, this ultimate doom cannot fall. Hence:—

peccatum in Spiritum Sanctum non dicitur irremissibile quin in hac vita remitti possit, sed quia non facile in hac vita

remitti potest. Cuius difficultatis ratio est quia peccatum praedictum contrariatur gratiae directe, per quam peccatum remittitur: vel irremissibile dicitur quia non habet in se causam remissionis, cum sit ex malitia commissum, sicut habet peccatum quod ex ignorantia vel infirmitate committitur. (*De Ver.* xxiv. 11. ad 7.)

In this passage, and in others like it, the connexion between the *peccatum irremissibile* and *malitia* does not depend upon the doctrine that *malitia* need not presuppose *habitus*. For all *malitia*, whether caused by habit or by the removal of certain *dona Spiritus*, must tend to produce the same hardness of heart and impenitence. Doubtless, the six recognized *peccata contra Spiritum Sanctum* present the stoutest resistance to the renewing power of grace, and because all those six are theological in character, St. Thomas will not allow that all malicious sins are technically *contra Spiritum Sanctum*. Nevertheless, it is plain that among moral sins, apart from any question of theology, those caused by *malitia* come nearest to deserving the name *peccata irremissibilia*. The doctrine of repentance and forgiveness is eminently Christian, yet for the conjunction of *malitia* with impenitence St. Thomas had to go no further than Aristotle:—

quicumque ex electione peccat vel ex industria adhaeret peccato quod eligit, quasi per se bono, et sic fini: et ideo tale peccatum non de facili medicinam recipit: unde Philosophus in vii Ethic. per hoc ostendit quod incontinens, quia ex passione peccat sive infirmitate, facilius curatur quam intemperatus qui peccat ex electione. (*Sent.* ii, D. xliii, q. i. 4.)

St. Thomas is alluding to two passages in *Nicomachean Ethics* (vii. 1150. a. 21 and b. 29) in which Aristotle discusses the type of sinner who steadfastly seeks *beatitudo* in carnal pleasures; but for the *intemperatus ex malitia* (Ch. xvi, p. 288) we might substitute the *iniustus* or any other sinner (if there can be any others) whose actions are caused by *malitia*. Hence, although six special sins have a peculiar claim to the title of sins against the Spirit, we cannot be surprised that St. Thomas should write in one place:—

large loquendo etiam ille qui ex inclinatione habitus peccat potest dici peccare in Spiritum Sanctum, quia etiam ipse ex

consequenti renititur bonitati Spiritus Sancti. (*De Malo*, iii. 14.)

The following table will thus represent the character of sins relatively to the Persons of the Trinity :—

I *causa interior*	II *peccata*	III *Deus* as *obiectum*
infirmitas	vitia capitalia	in Patrem
ignorantia	?	in Filium
malitia	(*a*) desperatio, etc. (*b*) iniustitia (*c*) falsa beatitudo	in Spiritum Sanctum

In the lowest section of column ii, I have written abbreviated descriptions of all the types of sin which are, or tend to become, *irremissibilia*. Thus (*a*) *desperatio* stands for the six *peccata in Spiritum Sanctum*, (*b*) *iniustitia* is always caused by *malitia*, (*c*) *falsa beatitudo* means the sin of being *intemperatus ex malitia*, or, more generally, of deliberately pursuing a wrong *finis*.

The survey of sin from a theological standpoint is the last stage in our examination of St. Thomas's system, and I think I may claim that our preliminary estimate of this system, as one which is founded upon a peculiar view of the relation of Truth to Authority, has been amply confirmed. Both virtues and vices are organized by St. Thomas on the basis of a deep conviction that all the greater moralists, whether Pagan or Christian, had delivered, in substance at least, the same message. Errors and heresies there had been, beyond question, but the refining process of criticism had been ever working towards the revelation of a fundamental unity in principle ; and the last and greatest achievement of dialectic had been to prove that Aristotle was in harmony with the venerable traditions handed down from Cicero, Augustine, Gregory, and many others scarcely less famous. St. Thomas

would have been the last to affirm that Christianity had added nothing to the principles of right conduct: yet he perceived no inner discord between the moral and theological, and was even convinced that the lower doctrine had, after its own manner, anticipated most of the higher. Even in such matters as the Gifts of the Spirit, the Beatitudes, and the virtues of Hope and Charity, the penetrating foresight of Aristotle is seen to prepare the way for the Gospel. Especially in regard to the analysis of sin has the difficulty of marking the line of division between secular and theological been impressed on us, for no appreciation of *peccata* can escape the theological reference contained in the term *peccatum mortale*. Christianity, as I said before, had studied the nature of sin even more deeply than the nature of virtue, whereas Pagan philosophy had named and classified the virtues with enthusiasm, but had arrived at the vices only by a formal and almost frigid deduction. The result was that St. Thomas found it easier to separate theological from moral virtues than to treat of moral sins without theological implications.

CHAPTER XIX

A RETURN TO DANTE

To master even a part of St. Thomas's system one needs to borrow something of the astonishing patience displayed by its author, and it will be no more than I am bound to expect if the reader shall ere now have decided that no poet would undertake to transfer so vast a body of doctrine to a work of imagination, even when the work was on the scale of the *Divine Comedy*. In deprecation of such criticism I pleaded in an early chapter that Dante was professedly a student of philosophy, and that he wrote at the time when no artistic canons would have forbidden the use of poetical language and artifice for the exposition of a moral system. I have hinted, too, that it was by no means the purpose of this volume to prove that the scheme of Dante was immediately derived from St. Thomas. As a type and pattern, St. Thomas is pre-eminent: as a possible source of Dante's opinions his position is not yet adequately defined. But, in any case, the *Summa* stands before us like one of the great cathedrals: every other building of the period must perforce be interpreted by it, and only where difference is patent will the search for other models be straitly enjoined.

The notion that an impossible burden is going to be laid upon Dante may fairly be met by an assertion that the structure of the *Inferno*, as I shall try to explain it, does not require a tenth nor a twentieth part of the philosophical knowledge which the poet did undoubtedly possess. A modern student who turns his attention to mediaeval thought is hampered by the very fact that he encounters names as familiar as Plato and Aristotle and Cicero, for he has to learn by slow degrees that his actual knowledge of those authors is as much a hindrance as a help to the comprehension of theories

formulated in the twelfth or thirteenth century. But Dante himself came to philosophy with none of our learned prepossessions. To judge from the narrative of the *Convito*, he can have had no real acquaintance with philosophy until after the death of Beatrice. Then it was that, seeking on every side for consolation, he was attracted by the titles of certain famous works by Boethius and Cicero. He tells us that it was hard at first for him to enter into their meaning; that, nevertheless, he persevered until at last, like one who *va cercando argento e fuori della intenzione trova oro*, he found not only a remedy for his anguish but the conviction that Philosophy was *la somma cosa* (*Conv.* ii. 13). Thereupon he betook himself to the schools and disputations of professional students, and in a short time (*forse di trenta mesi*) tasted so deeply of the sweetness of his new mistress, that the love of her drove out every other thought. How Philosophy became for Dante *la bellissima e onestissima figlia dello Imperadore dell' Universo* (*Conv.* ii. 16), and how he wrote in her honour poems that cannot be distinguished from the praise of a living mistress, is a familiar story. But let me fasten only on the mention of a period, those *trenta mesi* which served to effect the complete conquest of Philosophy over her ardent votary. Those thirty months would be enough and more than enough for grasping all the main principles in such a system as I have attributed to St. Thomas; or, in other words, I shall not need to ask of Dante a greater knowledge of the philosophy then taught in the schools than an Oxford undergraduate might have of Plato or Aristotle at the time when he is examined for his degree. Is it extravagant to assume that Dante would rival in intelligence the young men who attain to even our highest academic distinctions? Meanwhile, there is no gainsaying the fact that immense veneration is paid to philosophers in the *Inferno*, and if commentators are agreed upon anything, it is that Virgil represents something like human philosophy. For that very reason, Virgil reaches and confesses his own limitations: yet no one, I presume, would infer from this that Dante, while still, as it were, under Virgil's guidance, would travesty doctrines learned of

Aristotle and Cicero and embodied in the orthodoxy of St. Thomas.

How far, then, are we bound to anticipate agreement between Dante and St. Thomas, and how far could the poet dissent from the judgements of the *Summa*, even without any intention of differing upon the more important questions of principle? That Dante would feel himself under a positive obligation to accept the moral teaching of St. Thomas, or Aristotle, or any one else, is a childish notion, for Authority, as a matter of discipline, was confined to the circle of theological truths, among which the principles of moral philosophy are not included. On the other hand, one cannot well imagine that Dante would have failed to imbibe one cardinal doctrine of St. Thomas, the doctrine that there exists a consensus of opinion among philosophers, and that dialectical method can harmonize all the more eminent traditions, save such as antiquity had already rejected. This does not mean that all writers were reduced to a level: the method of St. Thomas leaves room for almost any degree of individual merit in the authorities cited, and for a large amount of bias in their critic; and though we are bound to assume that Dante cannot have severed himself from the school of St. Thomas upon fundamental principles of morality, we are also at perfect liberty to assume that he could claim for himself great latitude in the presentation of those principles in his poem. To mention a few examples, I count it inconceivable that Dante would ever make external performance an essential part of *culpa*; or that he would exclude *superbia*, *invidia*, and *acedia* from the Inferno on the ground that they were more inward and less actual than the other capital vices; or, again, that he would imagine carnal sins and animal violence to be graver than spiritual sins like Flattery and Hypocrisy. But contrast with these instances others in which a choice of alternatives is offered. Take the number and arrangement of the vices, as determined by the opposing virtues. Here you might follow Aristotle or Cicero or Gregory or Augustine or Andronicus; or, with the help of a little courage and a little judicious silence, you might fuse

any two or three of these authors together; and all the while without any disloyalty to the method and teaching of St. Thomas. Suppose, then, that Dante had thought fit to construct an Inferno of seven circles, four of them to be inhabited by those who had sinned against the cardinal virtues, the other three by such as had offended against Faith, Hope, and Charity; to what sort of criticism would he be open? One might protest that all the finer shades of iniquity were disregarded; or that the theological virtues could not be so sharply separated from the moral, inasmuch as Charity was the *forma* of all: but if Dante were to hold fast to his contention that all sins must be opposed to one or other of these seven virtues, he would assuredly have the authority of the *Summa* behind him. Suppose, again, that it had pleased him to make eleven circles, corresponding with the eleven moral virtues of Aristotle's *Ethics*; would any contemporary moral philosopher have been anxious to quarrel with him? Some one, perhaps, might have objected that sins against theological virtues were unnoticed; but Dante might have escaped even this condemnation (or most of it) by arguing that no one could be guilty of theological sins without first committing moral sins sufficient for his damnation. I will not labour to invent further alternatives and combinations. Let it suffice to assert that any one with Dante's education could have mapped out and peopled a dozen Infernos, all of them illustrative of the same principles, yet most of them complex enough to hide their origin from all but the expert in mediaeval philosophy. Let us, at least, avoid the error of supposing that Dante had to make a final choice between (for example) Aristotle and Cicero; as though, when criticism had traced a doctrine of the *Inferno* to one of these authors, the pretensions of the other were at an end. Similarly, if all sins *circa passiones* can be reduced to seven capital vices, let us be slow to infer that another method of classifying the same sins is inadequate, merely because it seems to omit two or three of the capital seven. A philosopher of Dante's time would probably argue that, while the *potentiae* of the human soul were limited, the ways of expressing the developed results of them were many.

The perfect dialectician would discern the same truths in many philosophers; and if sometimes an omission should appear too palpable, he would excuse it by some ingenious reason and supplement it from another source.

And now, before we make a direct attack upon the *Inferno*, it will be useful to search in Dante's other writings for evidence of his preferences in philosophy. No such evidence can be conclusive. A man might teach with all possible fervour that a certain philosophy was wholly correct, and yet, after a few more years of thought and experience, he might modify or even abandon his opinion. Even if Dante had declared in the *Convito* that there was only one way of classifying sins, we could not absolutely bind him down to that way in the *Inferno*. As it is, there is no such declaration to help or hinder us: we can only take note of indications and suggestions, assigning to them as much value as we please.

One fact will not be disputed, that Dante put Aristotle above all other philosophers. If a comparison between St. Thomas and Dante be reasonable, I should say that the poet was by far the more pronounced Aristotelian. This is accounted for partly by the interval of forty years, during which the fame of Aristotle had been constantly increasing; partly by the far wider erudition and profounder thought of St. Thomas. For a layman of his period, Dante has a prodigious knowledge and understanding of philosophy; yet the tone of the novice, or, at least, of one who is still under the fascination of a new discovery, is often distinguishable. Read a book of the *Convito* and then read fifty pages of the *Summa*, and you will acknowledge that you have passed from a pupil to a master, from an amateur to a professional student. It matters little, however, whether or no we can account for Dante's enthusiasm, so long as we can gauge its effects. I pass over the many titles of honour and eulogies lavished upon the *glorioso filosofo*, for no accumulation of these can be so instructive as the perusal of one of the longer discussions in which Aristotle is compared with other philosophers.

The sixth chapter of *Convito* iv discourses upon the question of Authority, and contains an elaborate apology for

rejecting (in the ode prefixed to the book) an opinion supported by philosophical authority and another which bore the sanction of an emperor. The extent of imperial authority does not concern us, but the general homily upon Philosophy leads incidentally to a demonstration of Aristotle's pre-eminence. Dante begins with the decisive words:—

Manifesto è che Aristotile sia degnissimo di fede e d' obbedienza; e che le sue parole sono somma e altissima autoritade, così provare si può. (*Conv.* iv. 6. 50.)

The alleged proof rests on the principle that, among the professors of any art or science, he is most worthy of obedience who best understands the *ultimo fine* and guides others to it. Among philosophers Aristotle had the clearest vision of the end of human life. Dante then describes the tenets of the Stoics, the Epicureans, and the Academics, and shows that the last-named school was absorbed by the Peripatetics. He concludes as follows:—

e tutti quelli che a questa setta s' appresero Peripatetici sono chiamati; e tiene questa gente oggi il reggimento del mondo in dottrina per tutte parti, et puotesi appellare quasi cattolica opinione. (Ibid., line 145.)

Dante, however, speaks of the Stoics with apparent respect, and observes that *quello glorioso Catone* was one of them: nor does he hint that even the Epicureans were other than serious people. The twenty-second chapter of the same book also deals with the *segno* of human life, and, as before, Dante says:—

Lasciando dunque stare l' opinione che di quello ebbe Epicuro filosofo, e che di quello ebbe Zenone, venire intendo sommariamente alla verace opinione d' Aristotile e degli altri Peripatetici. (*Conv.* iv. 22.)

The question of the *summum bonum* is one that makes a plain division between the schools of moral philosophy, but no one versed in the method of St. Thomas is likely to argue that a resolution to follow Aristotle, in preferring contemplation to a life of action or of pleasure, entails the rejection of all moral doctrines attributed to the Stoics or the Epicureans. In point of fact, we can easily turn to other passages wherein

Dante betrays his readiness to gather truth from sources other than Aristotelian, and his reluctance to attribute positive error to any sage of the ancient world. Little need be said of his immense obligations to Cicero, for Cicero did not belong to any of the schools whose doctrines had to be rejected. We shall easily recall, too, the catholicity of the *filosofica famiglia* encircling Aristotle in Limbo, and the remarkable tolerance which could make Averroes a member of it. But let us also collect some scattered passages which imply that intention to teach the truth is not confined to a single school.

While interpreting his own view of the true *nobiltà*, as set forth in the ode preceding *Convito* iv, Dante comes to the lines:—

> sicchè ad alquanti
> lo seme di felicità s' accosta,
> messo da Dio nell' anima ben posta. (118–20.)

The human *bontà*, he says, descends upon the soul from on high in a manner that may be explained both philosophically and theologically; but the philosophical theories are many and, as it seems, discordant. Avicenna and Algazel teach one thing, Plato another, and Pythagoras a third. Upon this diversity of opinion Dante remarks:—

> Se ciascuno fosse a difendere la sua opinione, potrebbe essere che la verità si vedrebbe essere in tutte. Ma perocchè nella prima faccia paiono un poco lontane dal vero, non secondo quelle procedere si conviene, ma secondo l' opinione d' Aristotile e delli Peripatetici. (*Conv.* iv. 21. 25.)

Here speaks the true disciple of St. Thomas, and the same spirit is manifest throughout the chapter. No sooner has the doctrine of Aristotle been expounded than Dante adds:—

> E ciò è concordevole alla sentenza di Tullio in quello *di Senettute*, che parlando in persona di Catone dice: 'Imperciò celestiale anima discese in noi . . .' (Ibid., line 80.)

Not content with this, he proceeds to quote the *Liber de Causis* (a work which he would certainly *not* suppose to be by Aristotle), and then, turning from philosophy to theology, he shows that the same Divine influence is signified in the seven

dona Spiritus. So far as concerns method, all that Dante writes here is a pure reflection of St. Thomas. Even where certain opinions appear erroneous, a courteous and optimistic view is taken of them: and even where the true opinion is ascribed to one philosopher in particular, we have an intimation that others have shared it.

An interesting parallel is supplied by the *Paradiso*, where Beatrice, though refuting an error, expresses a similar charity. The topic, as it happens, is again that of the connexion of the human soul with celestial influences. Dante has been conversing with the spirits who float up and down in the transparency of the moon; and Beatrice, reading his thoughts, says to him:—

> Ancor di dubitar ti dà cagione,
> parer tornarsi l' anime alle stelle,
> secondo la sentenza di Platone. (*Par.* iv. 22.)

In the *Timaeus* it is written that the soul returns to the star whence it came. If Plato meant literally what he said, he was wrong, but Beatrice continues:—

> E forse sua sentenza è d' altra guisa
> che la voce non suona, ed esser puote
> con intenzion da non esser derisa.
> S' egl' intende tornare a queste rote
> l' onor dell' influenza e il biasmo, forse
> in alcun vero suo arco percote.
>
> (Ibid., lines 55–60.)

That Beatrice should have suggested this flattering interpretation of Plato is all the more remarkable because, as she afterwards observes, the theory of heavenly influence which Plato may have wished to imply is itself liable to dangerous misunderstanding.

To these instances I cannot refrain from adding Dante's pious and pleasing anticipation of a general harmony in heaven. He is maintaining that philosophy assists faith by producing a state of mind from which arise Faith, Hope, and Charity:—

> Per le quali tre virtù si sale a filosofare a quella Atene celestiale dove gli Stoici e Peripatetici ed Epicurei, per l' arte della Verità eterna, in un volere concordevolmente concorrono. (*Conv.* iii. 14. 136.)

Such optimism would be incredible, did we not also remember Dante's opinion that the motionless Empyrean is the fit home of Theology, inasmuch as that science is essentially productive of peace and quietness. One who could believe that our Lord's words, *la pace mia do a voi, la pace mia lascio a voi* (cf. *Conv.* ii. 15. 170), were a prophecy of the work of Theology in the world would have no difficulty in believing that Stoic lions would, in the celestial Athens, lie down contentedly with Epicurean lambs.

These examples of Dante's tolerance are too indefinite to warrant any special anticipations of his procedure in the *Divine Comedy*, but they are, I think, a warning against assuming that even so marked a preference for Aristotle as the poet confesses can put a non-Aristotelian arrangement of vices out of the question. If Dante can discern an identity of purpose, as regards one doctrine, in Aristotle, Cicero, the *De Causis*, and even the *dona Spiritus*, there is no reason why he should not do so in other cases. At least, we must hesitate to suppose that he would interpret Aristotle and Cicero in the narrowest and most dogmatic sense. But careful readers of Dante will be expecting me to notice a discussion in the *Convito* which bears almost directly upon the subject-matter of the *Inferno*. I refer to the analysis of moral virtue appended to the *Canzone* of *Convito* iv. Here the selection of Aristotle as model is quite as decisive as in the cases already quoted, and the words of the poem make explicit allusion to the *Ethics*: —

> Dico ch' ogni virtù principalmente
> vien da una radice,
> virtute intendo che fa l' uom felice
> in sua operazione:
> quest' è (secondochè l' *Etica* dice)
> un abito eligente,
> lo qual dimora in mezzo solamente;
> e tai parole pone. (81–8.)

In his commentary Dante observes that the virtues have been variously distinguished by philosophers: —

Ma perocchè in quella parte dove aperse la bocca la divina

sentenza d' Aristotile, da lasciare mi pare ogni altrui sentenza, volendo dire quali queste sono, brievemente, secondo la sua sentenza, trapasserò di quelle ragionando. (*Conv.* iv. 17. 23.)

There follows a brief description of each of Aristotle's eleven moral virtues, while, at the end of the list, we are told that each virtue has two 'collateral enemies', one consisting *in troppo*, the other *in poco*. If, then, Dante had wished at any time to arrive at a list of vices by derivation from the virtues, what more natural than to assume that he would have made a simple transcript from the *Ethics*? But let us first make sure that Dante's proclamation in favour of Aristotle is followed, even in this section of the *Convito*, by the exclusion of non-Aristotelian elements. Dante is occupied for several chapters in explaining the nature of *gentilezza*, and has to refer frequently to that theory of celestial influence upon the soul which has lately been mentioned. That he conceives the whole of his discourse to be in harmony with Aristotle's teaching is certain, yet one cannot resist the impression that all the while he is moving gradually away from distinctive Aristotelianism to that kind of blend of Aristotle with other traditions which St. Thomas has accustomed us to expect.

The eleven virtues of Aristotle are given as a complete list of moral virtues, but no sooner has Dante set them down than he begins to reflect that Prudence is not among them; whereupon he writes:—

Bene si pone prudenza, cioè senno, per molti essere morale virtù; ma Aristotile dinumera quella intra le intellettuali, avvegnachè essa sia conducitrice delle morali virtù e mostri la via per che elle si compongono e senza quella essere non possono. (*Conv.* iv. 17. 77 ff.)

The difference between a moral virtue and a *conducitrice delle morali* seems trivial in itself, but soon we begin to suspect that the deeper reason for introducing Prudence was its position as a cardinal virtue; and Dante, as he develops the argument, seems unconsciously to pass to an estimate of the virtues in which the cardinal four tend to absorb the others. The passage last quoted is followed by a distinction between speculative and practical beatitude, an assertion that the

former is superior, and a kind of apology for the stress laid on the moral virtues. Then, after an interruption of several pages, the same topic is revived, and Dante says:—

> Veramente l' uso del nostro animo è doppio, cioè pratico e speculativo . . . Quello del pratico si è operare per noi virtuosamente, cioè onestamente, con Prudenza, con Temperanza, con Fortezza e con Giustizia . . . (*Conv.* iv. 22. 103 ff.)

Here the four cardinal virtues stand for the whole duty of man in the practical life. Their glory and pre-eminence is as manifest as when Dante saw them in the form of

> quattro stelle
> non viste mai fuor ch' alla prima gente;
> (*Purg.* i. 23)

or as when, in the Earthly Paradise, he gazed on the *carro trionfale* and saw how

> Dalla sinistra quattro facean festa
> in porpora vestite, dietro al modo
> d' una di lor ch' avea tre occhi in testa.
> (*Purg.* xxix. 130.)

No one, I hope, will accuse me of so great a blunder as imagining that Dante was disloyal to Aristotle because he honoured the cardinal virtues above all others. A whole chapter (Ch. viii) has been spent in proving the contrary. I am aware, too, that the reduction of all practical duties to the cardinal virtues may be simply a matter of convenience, and wholly without prejudice to Dante's earlier declarations. Yet if there is good evidence that a mediaeval student would suppose Aristotle to have differed from other moralists only in his manner of subordinating other moral virtues to the cardinal four, there is evidence no whit less forcible, in the *Secunda Secundae* of the *Summa*, that Aristotle could not be handled thus without receiving a strong infection from other traditions. Without stopping to argue the point, however, I will pass on to the next step in Dante's treatment of the moral virtues.

Dante now begins to comment upon that part of his *Canzone* which divides the life of man into four ages, each of which has its appropriate virtues or activities. Since, however, the

fourth and last age (*Senio*) is to be passed in thankfulness and contemplation rather than in the exercise of new virtues, it will be enough to take as our text the lines descriptive of *Adolescenza*, *Gioventute*, and *Senettute*. The soul, says Dante:—

> Ubbidiente, soave e vergognosa
> è nella prima etate;
> e sua persona adorna di beltate
> con le sue parti accorte.
> In Giovanezza temperata e forte,
> piena d' amore e di cortese lode,
> e solo in lealtà far si diletta.
> È nella sua Senetta
> prudente e giusta, e larghezza se n' ode,
> e 'n sè medesma gode
> d' udire e ragionar dell' altrui prode. (125–35.)

The first point to be remarked is that in the earliest age of life Dante asks for no virtues proper. *Obbedienza*, *Soavità*, *Vergogna*, and *Adornezza* he quaintly describes as *quattro cose necessarie all' entrare nella città del ben vivere* (*Conv.* iv. 24. 114), but none of the four rise above the level of *laudabili passioni* (a term applied to *vergogna* in *Conv.* iv. 19. 41), and earlier in the same *Canzone* we are told that, whereas virtue always implies *gentilezza*, the converse is not true:—

> E noi in donne ed in età novella
> vedem questa salute,
> in quanto vergognose son tenute,
> ch' è da virtù diverso. (105–9.)

In the commentary upon the last line Dante says that *vergogna non è virtù ma certa passion buona* and quotes Aristotle to that effect (cf. *Nic. Eth.* iv. 1128. b. 18–22). Herein we have a good example of literal adherence to Aristotle.

Five things are expected of the noble soul in its second period, for now it must be *temperata*, *forte*, *amorosa*, *cortese*, and *leale*. Of these requisitions only the first two provoke any doubt as to the influence most active upon Dante. He begins by recalling his dissertation upon *appetito* (*Conv.* iv. 22), and observes that—

Questo appetito mai altro non fa che cacciare e fuggire: e qualunque ora esso caccia quello che e quanto si conviene, e fugge quello che e quanto si conviene, l' uomo è nelli termini della sua perfezione. (*Conv.* iv. 26. 36 ff.)

The allusion to Aristotle's διώξις καὶ φυγή is evident (e.g. *Nic. Eth.* vi. 1139. a. 22), and there follows a mention of two very familiar terms:—

e così questo appetito, che irascibile e concupiscibile si chiama, quanto ch' ello sia nobile, alla ragione ubbidire conviene. (Ibid., line 46 ff.)

Dante represents Reason as a *cavalcatore* guiding Appetite, the steed, with bridle and spur, and his application of the image shows clearly that Temperance is conceived as the virtue which restrains the *concupiscibilis*, Courage as that which spurs on the *irascibilis* to the fight. Reason, says Dante:—

lo freno usa quando caccia (e chiamasi quello freno *Temperanza*, la quale mostra lo termine infino al quale è da cacciare); lo sprone usa quando fugge, per lo tornare al loco onde fuggire vuole (e questo sprone si chiama *Fortezza* ovvero *Magnanimità*, la qual virtute mostra lo loco ove è da fermarsi e da pugnare). (Ibid., line 51 ff.)

Here we have a reminiscence of St. Thomas's simple way of treating these two cardinal virtues. Each is the characteristic virtue of one of the appetitive *potentiae*, and each, therefore, will attach to itself all the minor virtues whose *modus* is the same as its own. The position of Dante is, in fact, exactly illustrated by the argument which enabled St. Thomas to number *clementia* and *mansuetudo* among the parts of *temperantia*, on the ground that their *modus* was *refrenatio* (*S.* 2. 2. clvii. 3); and by teaching that Temperance is the *freno* applied by Reason, Dante signifies his assent to a method of grouping the virtues which St. Thomas could barely pretend to derive from Aristotle (Ch. viii, p. 156). But since Dante has no occasion here to refer to the *partes temperantiae*, let us pay even closer attention to the words *Fortezza ovvero Magnanimità*. The virtue of *fortitudo* has often been fruitful in perplexity, because the Aristotelian

account of it is barely consistent with its office as a cardinal virtue. Now when Dante is describing the several moral virtues he defines *fortezza* as

> arme e freno a moderare l'audacia e la timidità nostra nelle cose che sono corruzione della nostra vita. (*Conv.* iv. 17. 31.)

Of *magnanimità* he says that it is

> moderatrice e acquistatrice de' grandi onori e fama. (Ibid., line 45.)

I pass over the fact that *fortezza* appears as *freno* rather than as *sprone*, but is it not obvious that these definitions are meant to be strictly Aristotelian, and that *fortezza* is perfectly distinct from *magnanimità*? Yet only a few pages later we find that Dante (*a*) removes *fortezza* altogether from the class of virtues and places it along with *bellezza* in the class of *corporali bontadi* (*Conv.* iv. 19. 43), (*b*) gives *fortezza* and *magnanimità* as alternative names for the cardinal virtue of the *irascibilis*. In other words, Aristotle's *fortitudo* (*contra pericula mortis*, etc.) drops out of the list of virtues, and Courage takes the form of *magnanimitas*, the virtue that bids us pursue *bona ardua* and overcome dangers or trials in our path. The Aristotelian sense yields to the Ciceronian (if that be a fair name for it), and *magnanimitas* becomes, as St. Thomas had said, a *pars fortitudinis*, or even the same as *fortitudo*. You may argue that there is no real inconsistency, but who will argue that the selection of Aristotle as model removes all uncertainty as to the subsequent treatment of any virtue or vice?

A few words must be said of the third stage of life, *Senettute*. Four virtues are put down for it, *prudenza*, *giustizia*, *larghezza*, and *affabilità*. The first calls for no remark here, and the analysis of Justice, unfortunately, is missing. Dante intended to treat of it in the *penultimo trattato* of his book (*Conv.* iv. 27. 100), but that *trattato* was never accomplished. As regards *larghezza*, the main point is that Aristotle and Cicero are named as concurrent authorities, for both teach that true *larghezza* is impossible without due regard for time and

place, and for the interests of self and others. A second quotation from Cicero denounces those *che tolgono agli altri per dare agli altri* (*Conv.* iv. 27. 136). As to *affabilità*, not a word is borrowed from Aristotle, and Dante finds his solitary illustration in a saying of the elder Cato in the *De Senectute* (*Conv.* iv. 27. 151). Lastly, it is not unworthy of attention that of the eleven moral virtues named by Aristotle (or twelve with Prudence) six are entirely omitted. Some of these, such as *magnificenza*, may go by implication; and perhaps *eutrapelia* belongs to the *laudabili passioni* proper to adolescence: but that *verità* and *mansuetudine* should be unnoticed is a little surprising, even when we admit that a poet, sketching the course of human life, is not pledged to fullness and precision. I think, then, that it will be illuminating to write down all the steps through which Dante may fairly be said to pass:—

(1) Felicity, on its practical side, is secured by exercise of the moral virtues.

(2) Where Aristotle has spoken, other philosophers can be neglected. There are, therefore, eleven moral virtues, defined as by Aristotle.

(3) Prudence also is necessary, and Aristotle called this an intellectual virtue. Still, he showed that it was involved in good moral conduct.

(4) The practical life means life in accordance with the four cardinal virtues.

(5) *Gioventute* needs especially *temperanza* and *fortezza*. *Temperanza* is the *freno* upon excessive passion, and *fortezza* spurs men on to pursue higher objects. It may also be called *magnanimità*.

(6) Cicero and Aristotle teach the same truths about *larghezza* (which is found, we notice, in the neighbourhood of *giustizia*), and a quotation from Cicero suffices to explain *affabilità* (also, perhaps, a *pars iustitiae*?).

What Dante does here on a small scale is simply what St. Thomas does on a vast scale in the *Summa*. We might accuse him of not carrying out his professed intention, or we may assume that he supposed himself really to be doing so:

and because the latter supposition is the wiser, the expectation of simplicity in the scheme of the *Inferno* is vain. Had Dante even announced his intention of following Aristotle alone in arranging his sinners, what a stupendous blunder would it be for the industrious commentator to reach down his *Nicomachean Ethics* and imagine that Dante's actual behaviour would all be disclosed therein! Consider first the fact that both the theory and the formal list of capital vices were unknown to Aristotle; but consider also that Dante would, in all probability, have utterly refused to admit that Aristotle's account of moral sins was inadequate: and then, as an exercise in mediaeval philosophy, consider how you would construct an Inferno on Aristotelian principles, yet without forgetting the capital vices and without appearing to refute Cicero or other eminent persons. This, or something very like it, is the problem set to the interpreter of Dante's *Inferno*. The only rules for our guidance are so obvious that they have commonly been forgotten—(1) that Dante's explicit statements must outweigh all other evidence, (2) that his statements must be interpreted by the canons of the thirteenth century, and not by those of the twentieth.

CHAPTER XX

MALIZIA IN THE INFERNO

THE explicit utterances of Dante upon the distribution of sinners in the *Inferno* are all contained in the eleventh canto. The two poets are then resting for a little while in the sixth circle, and every reader must remark the curious fact that Virgil says not one word about the sixth circle itself. This silence, however, I propose to imitate for the present, while for other and obvious reasons there is no need to discuss the first circle, known as Limbo. Seven circles then remain, and all of these fall within the scope of Virgil's discourse; but the object of the present chapter is to deal only with the lowest three. Nothing can affect our theory of the *Inferno* so deeply as the sense put upon the term *malizia*, and no words seem to me to offer such clear and positive guidance as these:—

> D' ogni malizia ch' odio in cielo acquista
> ingiuria è il fine . . . (*Inf.* xi. 22.)

Herein I can see nothing but a literal and technical pronouncement upon the character of the sins punished in the three lowest circles—a statement, in fact, that all sins caused by *malizia* are to be classified as *contra iustitiam*. But, first of all, I must protest against an opinion, sometimes found in commentaries, that Dante uses *malizia* in two senses: a wider sense in line 22, where it means wrongdoing in general, a narrower sense in line 82, where it represents Aristotle's κακία and thus excludes sins of incontinence. I shall venture to assert not only that this opinion is wholly unsupported by evidence, but that its acceptance must render the scheme of the *Inferno* utterly unintelligible. Virgil's explanation points, in the first instance, to the *tre cerchietti* which have yet to be traversed, and comprehends, therefore, only sins of *malizia*.

Afterwards, when Dante observes that he has heard nothing of the sinners outside the city of Dis, the answer is that, if Dante's wits had not been wandering, he would have perceived that the first four circles (not counting Limbo) contained only examples of incontinence, and would not have expected the term *malizia* to cover them. The introduction of *bestialitade* in line 83 has caused a difficulty, but not one that can affect the meaning of *malizia* in line 22. Moreover, the final answer to the proposal to make *ogni malizia* mean 'all kinds of evil' is that Virgil's statement would then be a flat contradiction of that very philosophy which Dante is forthwith reproached for forgetting. Unless we can imagine Dante to have interpreted Aristotle in a manner inconceivable to St. Thomas, the doctrine that *all* sin has *iniuria* for its *finis* is about as false as any doctrine well could be. For this would amount to denying the existence of all sins in which the sinner's end is the gratification of passion. Only when passion is wholly absent can *malum alienum* be an end in itself, and only then is *iniuria* (to God or man) the real *finis*. How then can Dante be credited with such ineptitude as to make Virgil at one moment contradict Aristotle, and the next moment rebuke Dante for forgetting the *Ethics*? *Malitia*, no doubt, can be used in a looser sense, but the mention of *iniuria* as *finis* at once dismisses all sins but those committed *ex malitia*. Let us start, therefore, from the simple proposition that all malicious sins are *iniuriae*, and test it by the criterion of St. Thomas's philosophy.

Two points were firmly established in Chapters xiii and xvi, (1) that no sins committed *ex infirmitate* (i.e. *ex passione*) can be malicious, (2) that no genuine act of Injustice can be anything else. But, again, we found objections to asserting that all malicious sins must be sins against Justice; for (1) there are the six *peccata contra Spiritum Sanctum*, (2) there is the kind of sin typified in the difficult example of the *intemperatus ex malitia*. Now with regard to sins against the Holy Spirit the argument of St. Thomas is conducted on the plane of theology. If, therefore, we can suppose that Dante desired to suppress the distinctively theological treatment of sin, we remove one objection to his proposition, *D' ogni malizia*

ingiuria è il fine. The plan of this chapter forbids me to discuss here the general problem about theological sins, but I wish it to be understood that my reason for setting aside the sins against the Holy Spirit is that I do not believe it was Dante's intention to recognize them, save in so far as they could be reduced to the status of moral sins. After this tentative exclusion, we are left with all the malicious sins caused by *habitus*, and here, as I say, we have to confront the *intemperatus ex malitia*, that paradoxical person who makes carnal acts his *finis* and yet is perfectly unmoved by carnal passion. We can call him neither *iniustus* nor *luxuriosus*, but we must be satisfied to say that he sins against the love of God by preferring false to true beatitude. Does Dante, then, make a blunder? or must we interpret *ingiuria è il fine* in some untechnical sense? The dilemma, I think, is not genuine, for we are not bound to assume that Dante would desire to show his acquaintance with every moral conundrum which philosophy could invent. I have ventured to hint that St. Thomas himself may have only half perceived this difficulty, and it is possible that Dante did not perceive it at all: but my assertions about Dante will be limited to two, (1) that the *intemperatus ex malitia*, if recognized, ought certainly to be in one of the three lowest circles; (2) that, in point of fact, there is no such person to be found in the *Inferno*. There is only one way of proving the latter assertion, and that is by a detailed examination of all the species of sin encountered in the three lowest circles. If all the malicious sins are found to be modes of Injustice, this will be equivalent to a proof that Dante either did not or could not or would not allow the existence of the *intemperatus ex malitia*, as a sinner distinguished, on the one hand, from the *iniustus*, and, on the other, from the *incontinens*.

But before we enter the circles of Force and Fraud, it will be expedient to ask whether Dante has touched upon the nature of Justice in any of his other writings. Nothing as authoritative as that unwritten *penultimo trattato* of the *Convito* has survived for our assistance, but there is one very remarkable passage which I shall transcribe almost in full. Dante is

alleging a number of reasons which induced him to love the vulgar tongue, and one of these was *bontà* :—

Ancora la bontà fece me a lei amico. E qui è da sapere che ogni bontà propria in alcuna cosa è amabile in quella. . . . E quanto ella è più propria tanto ancora è più amabile ; onde avvegnachè ciascuna virtù sia amabile nell' uomo, quella è più amabile in esso ch' è più umana; e questa è la giustizia, la quale è solamente nella parte razionale ovvero intellettuale, cioè nella volontà. Questa è tanto amabile che, siccome dice il Filosofo nel quinto dell' Etica, i suoi nemici l' amano, siccome sono ladroni e rubatori: e però vedemo che il suo contrario, cioè la ingiustizia, massimamente è odiata ; siccome tradimento, ingratitudine, falsità, furto, rapina, inganno, e loro simili. Li quali sono tanto inumani peccati che, ad iscusare sè dell' infamia di quelli, si concede da lunga usanza che uomo parli di sè. (*Conv.* i. 12. 60–84.)

Put this side by side with *Inferno* xi, and then with the scheme of the three lowest circles, and the resemblance is, surely, illuminating. The points are these :—

(1) Justice is the most human of virtues because its seat (*subiectum*, as St. Thomas would say) is the *parte razionale*, that is to say, the will. By employing also the word *intellettuale* Dante goes almost beyond St. Thomas—by whom *intellectus* is commonly reserved for the cognitive act—but probably he means no more than in *Conv.* iv. 22. 95, where he says that *animo* signifies—

solamente quello che spetta alla parte razionale, cioè la volontà e lo intelletto.

(2) The grammatical position of *solamente* (loc. cit. line 92) is a little dubious, but the sense of the passage shows that Justice is the *only* moral virtue seated in the will.

(3) Justice being the highest moral virtue, Injustice is the worst of sins. To be quite accurate, Dante only says that it is the most hated, but no one will doubt that he means it to be also the gravest. We must observe, too, that in calling sins of Injustice *inumani peccati* Dante does not contradict the *dell' uom proprio male* of *Inf.* xi. 25. The same sin may be called 'inhuman' because it is the deepest corruption of man's proper nature, or 'peculiar to man' because man alone is capable of

it. In the *Inferno*, indeed, the *proprio male* applies to *frode*, as distinguished from *forza*, but as that distinction is not mentioned in the passage quoted from the *Convito*, I will not discuss it here.

(4) Dante names several species of Injustice, and every one of these is found among the malicious sins of the *Inferno*. Thus *tradimento* (with which *ingratitudine* may be associated) is in the ninth circle, *falsità* and *furto* are in different *bolgie* of the eighth, *rapina* is in the seventh (being one of the sins *contra proximum*), *inganno* is readily fastened upon the first *bolgia* of the eighth circle, where is Jason, who —

> con senno e con parole ornate
> Isifile ingannò. (*Inf.* xviii. 91.)

Inganno, however, is a term almost as wide as *frode*, and there is no absolute need to compress it into a single *bolgia*.

(5) The mention of *falsità* has a special interest, as proving that Dante agrees with St. Thomas in classifying mortal sins opposed to *veritas* as examples of Injustice: and this in spite of the Aristotelian definition given in *Conv.* iv. 17. 55, which would rank the virtue with those *circa passiones*.

Now the remarks upon Justice in *Convito* i are, from one point of view, almost casual; for Dante is not primarily interested in Justice or in virtue of any kind: but the more casual his observations appear to be, the more valuable, as it seems to me, is their testimony. There is no imaginable reason why he should handle Justice in an unphilosophical manner, and nothing could possibly be gained by selecting as specimens of Injustice sins normally opposed to some virtue other than Justice. Unless, therefore, we assume a complete revolution in Dante's opinions, we have a right to infer that *tradimento*, *falsità*, and all the others, would be classified in the *Inferno* as *contra iustitiam*: and seeing that the list in the *Convito* is admittedly imperfect (this Dante shows by the words *e loro simili*), but does include examples of the sins found in *each* of the three circles of malice, a courageous criticism might declare already that Dante meant his *ingiuria è il fine* to be a technical statement. Still, the *Convito* can only

raise a presumption, and no method can be so effective as a progress through the *tre cerchietti*.

The circle of *forza*, however, offers an immediate obstacle, for we stumble there upon the problem of *bestialitas*, and if Dante did indeed combine with the sins of violence those which Aristotle had called 'bestial', we cannot expect the sins of the seventh circle to tally with a conventional list of sins contrary to Justice. *Bestialitas* is far too difficult a subject to be introduced at this point, and I propose to omit it altogether until it can receive proper attention. The result of this policy will be that the two lower *gironi* of the seventh circle must temporarily be passed over. The sins of violence against other men are simple enough, and are all unmistakable examples of Injustice: —

> Morte per forza e ferute dogliose
> nel prossimo si danno, e nel suo avere
> ruine, incendi, e tollette dannose:
> onde omicide e ciascun che mal fiere,
> guastatori e predon, tutti tormenta
> lo giron primo per diverse schiere. (*Inf.* xi. 34–9.)

A comparison of this list with the *commutationes involuntariae* of St. Thomas (Ch. xvi, p. 276) will quickly satisfy us that Dante is merely enumerating injuries *in personam* and *in rem*. It is possible that *bestialitas* will intrude itself even into this *girone*; and, again, I might argue at once that some of the sins in the two lower *gironi* are certainly *iniuriae*: but, on the whole, the simplest plan will be to leave untouched all sins of violence against God and self until the problem relating to them can be attacked as a whole. We must imagine, therefore, that, stepping over the blasphemers and suicides and usurers, we now enter the circle of Fraud.

The eighth circle is divided into ten *bolgie*, and it happens that the first of these is one of the more loosely constructed, and also one where a verbal and pedantic agreement between St. Thomas and Dante would be least easy to demonstrate. Dante observes two companies of sinners, the first composed of *ruffiani* (*lenones*), the second of seducers who ensnared their victims by deceit, and intended from the beginning to play

them false. The *ruffiano* is one who gains money or advantage for himself by trafficking in carnal matters, but his business does not imply carnal acts on his own account. The *seduttore*, on the other hand, aims at a certain object which seems to make his sin one of sensuality. On further consideration, however, we should perceive that the sin of Jason consists rather in the *nocumentum proximi* involved in the false promises made to Isifile. I do not say that the carnal side of the sin is altogether irrelevant, for we may presume that Dante does place seducers and panders in the same *bolgia* because both have some concern with unlawful acts of sensuality: yet the pander is condemned because he makes money in an illegitimate manner, and the seducer because he intends deceit.

My next reflection on this *bolgia* is mainly negative, and is that Dante might have been expected to punish here the sin of *adulterium*—a sin which, technically speaking, he cannot be said to punish anywhere in the *Inferno*, unless, indeed, the bond between Jason and Medea was legitimate enough to make him an adulterer relatively to her:—

ed anco di Medea si fa vendetta. (*Inf.* xviii. 96.)

But such an interpretation would be hazardous, and Medea is perhaps in the same class as Isifile. Now when I say that *adulterium* is not formally mentioned in the *Inferno*, I have not forgotten the circle of *lussuriosi*: but St. Thomas has taught us that the mark of *adulterium*, as of all Injustice, is the intention of damaging another by getting more than your share of certain *iura*. Where passion is master, as with Paolo and Francesca, the sin of *adulterium* is impossible: hence it would be only in colloquial language that any of the sinners in the second circle could be called adulterers. Nevertheless, Dante's probable reason for not setting apart a *bolgia* for adultery was that he desired to avoid the appearance of repetition; and this, in its turn, is a probable explanation of the carnal aspect of the sins in the first *bolgia*, even though the sin did not (whether in *ruffiano* or in *seduttore*) consist in the carnal act itself. Two reflections are suggested by this *bolgia*. The first is that the offences published in the eighth and ninth

circles cannot be more than a *selection* of the possible sins against Justice. The number of *bolgie* Dante probably decided by artistic considerations, such as the number and character of those whom he wished to immortalize, and not by the exact catalogues of philosophers. Should any one call upon me to prove that all modes of Injustice discoverable in the *Summa* are visibly punished in the *Inferno*, I must give up without delay. But I cannot imagine that so unreasonable a demand could seriously be made ; for unless Dante intended to multiply circles and subdivisions of circles *ad infinitum*, he would be obliged to act on the principle suggested by St. Thomas in his interpretation of the Decalogue, and select a few sins as types of many others. The seducer, at any rate, does resemble the adulterer, in so far as he commits an *iniuria* through the meidum of a carnal act.

If my first reflection shows that Dante could easily reduce the possible number of sins to a manageable quantity, my second will prove that he could also multiply or vary them as much as he pleased. For when St. Thomas says that *scandalum* is a special sin because *ex intentione specialis finis sortitur rationem specialis peccati* (*S.* 2. 2. xliii. 3), he enunciates a principle elastic enough for any purpose. And so, if in the first *bolgia*, or anywhere else, Dante appears to describe a sin not explicitly named by St. Thomas among the sins of Injustice, we still shall have no right to say that the sin is not *contra iustitiam*, unless we can maintain that no *speciale proximi nocumentum* (loc. cit.) is involved in it. I do not allow for one instant that there is any difficulty about the sins of the first *bolgia*—for Dante's own *inganno* (*Conv.* i. 12. 81) is wide enough to cover them all—but the simplest way of showing that pander and seducer are both *iniusti* is to point out that both aim at *nocumentum proximi*. This, I think, cannot be disputed, and nothing else is necessary.

Before leaving this *bolgia*, however, I should like to notice a curious accident in the Latin translation of the *Ethics*, which may have slightly affected the position of the *leno*. Aristotle himself does include προαγωγεία among the συναλλάγματα ἀκούσια, and the Latin version, as now printed in the Parma

edition of St. Thomas's works (1866), transliterates the word correctly. But St. Thomas either had an incorrect version or failed to understand the word, for his own commentary has:—

paragogia, idest derivatio vel deductio: puta cum aliquis occulte dirigit aquam alterius ad alium locum. (*Eth.* v. 4.)

Thus Dante, if he knew no more than St. Thomas, was deprived of the visible authority of Aristotle, and yet was following Aristotle exactly when he counted the *leno* a sinner against Justice. The *leno* did not for this reason disappear from the *Ethics*, for among those who live by *turpis lucratio* (the αἰσχροκέρδεια of *Eth. Nic.* iv. 1122. a. 2) Aristotle mentions the πορνοβοσκοί (*de meretricio pasti*), and St. Thomas says:—

quidam vero lucrantur de turpibus et illicitis, puta de meretricio vel de aliquo simili, sicut lenones. (*Eth.* iv. 5.)

Technically, the *leno* is thus classed as *illiberalis*, but since we know also that Aristotle's πλεονεξία is rendered by *avaritia*, there must have been a peculiar difficulty in keeping some modes of *illiberalitas* distinct from sins against Justice. Or, to express the facts in another way, you would only have to replace the passion of greed by cold-blooded calculation, and the *leno* would stand forth as *iniustus*. For that matter St. Thomas mentions *usurarii* hard by the *lenones* (I mean in *Eth.* iv. 5); yet Usury is, in the *Summa*, opposed to Justice and is even found in company with *rapina* and *furtum* (*S.* 2. 2. xxxii. 7). I repeat, then, that the sinners of the first *bolgia* are plainly guilty of Injustice, and I have lingered over them only for the sake of remarking certain principles which apply to all three circles of Malice.

Even now I have not done with general reflections, for I must add here that whenever Dante wished to emphasize the intellectual side of Injustice—as, in fact, he has done by his treatment of *frode*—he could make as much use as he pleased of the *vitia opposita prudentiae*. Prudence is a special virtue, and Imprudence a special vice, yet every sin implies a defect of Prudence and every defect of Prudence implies some fault in the will. In other words, a sin against Prudence must always be either a sin of incontinence or a sin of malice,

for Imprudence, to be a sin, must be culpable, and culpability resides entirely in the will. And has not St. Thomas himself remarked that *usus rationis indebitus maxime apparet in vitiis oppositis iustitiae* (*S.* 2. 2. lv. 8)? A sin like *negligentia* we naturally ascribe to incontinence, but *astutia, dolus, fraus*, and any other sins like them, must clearly be malicious. Hence, Dante can dwell freely upon the intellectual side of malicious sins without destroying their character as *contra iustitiam*.

To facilitate reference I will now write down the ten *bolgie* in their proper order, which is this:—

1. Ruffiani, &c.
2. Adulatori.
3. Simoniaci.
4. Indovini.
5. Barattieri.
6. Ipocriti.
7. Ladri.
8. Consiglieri frodolenti.
9. Seminatori di discordia.
10. Falsari d' ogni genere.

The titles are borrowed from Scartazzini, and are accurate enough for most purposes. The first *bolgia* need detain us no longer, and six of the remaining nine are occupied by sins which St. Thomas explicitly opposes to Justice; that is to say, to one of its 'parts'. Thus *divinatio* and *simonia* are opposed to *religio* (*S.* 2. 2. xcv and c), *adulatio* to *affabilitas* (*S.* 2. 2. cxv), *hypocrisis* and *falsitas* to *veritas* (*S.* 2. 2. cx and cxi), *furtum* to commutative Justice (*S.* 2. 2. lxvi). It should be observed that in the seventh *bolgia* is Vanni Fucci, who was—

ladro alla sacrestia de' belli arredi. (*Inf.* xxiv. 138.)

Strictly, therefore, his sin was *sacrilegium* and should be opposed to *religio*, but unless Dante had enough sacrilegious sinners for a special *bolgia*, he would naturally count Vanni Fucci's sin a form of theft.

Three *bolgie* remain for consideration, and I will take first the

seminator di scandalo e di scisma. (*Inf.* xxviii. 35.)

Both these sins are opposed by St. Thomas to Charity rather than to Justice, but we must notice that Dante does not preserve the most accurate sense of *schisma*: for the word should refer only to divisions within an ecclesiastical communion, and this sense does not fit the case of Mahomet, Curio, Mosca de' Lamberti, Bertram del Bornio, or indeed of any sinner named in the twenty-eighth canto. The examples of *schisma* show, in fact, that *seditio* or *contentio* or *discordia* would have been almost more suitable terms. Those sins also are in the *Summa* opposed to Charity, but this, apparently (cf. Ch. xviii, p. 308), is because St. Thomas does not bring sins against the state under the head of any moral vice, but tends to refer to *caritas* what we should have expected to belong to *iustitia generalis*. Yet if *any* moral virtue forbids Schism and Scandal and Contention, it must surely be Justice, and no one can seriously deny that in such offences *nocumentum proximi* would be fair description of the *finis*.

There are left now two sets of sinners, the *barattieri* and the *consiglieri frodolenti*, and both can very naturally be opposed to Justice. The *barattieri* offend against 'distributive' Justice, in so far as *acceptio personarum* is one of their principles: or, since they sin primarily by abusing an official position in their own interest, they might be condemned, like the *lenones*, for practising an illegitimate form of business. The fraudulent councillors, again, do an injury to others by giving advice with intention to deceive; or, like Guido da Montefetho, by advising a treacherous policy which must result in *malum alienum*. Neither here nor in any *bolgia* of the eighth circle is there a reasonable excuse for denying to Dante's *ingiuria è il fine* its proper and technical sense.

That the ninth circle should be reserved for traitors may be evidence of personal feeling as much as of philosophical learning: yet the distinction between general and special obligations (*Inf.* xi. 61) to others is always acknowledged by St. Thomas, and the admission of the principle is found especially in the classification of *iniuriae* (e. g. in the Decalogue). On this basis the individuality of *religio*, *pietas*, *observantia*, and *gratitudo* is established, and perhaps I may quote again the words *ubi invenitur specialis ratio debiti alicui*

personae, ibi est specialis virtus (*S.* 2. 2. ci. 3). A sin against *pietas* and *gratitudo* may often take the form of treachery, nor must we forget that Dante himself calls *tradimento* a sin of Injustice (*Conv.* i. 12. 79). All the sins in the ninth circle are plainly *iniuriae*, though some of them (e. g. in Antenora) are injuries to the state rather than to individuals.

Setting aside, then, the two *gironi* of the seventh circle which have not been examined, I think we may assert positively that all Dante's malicious sins are intended to rank as *iniuriae*. The treatment of *adulatio* and *hypocrisis* shows that he agreed with the *Secunda Secundae* in reducing the Aristotelian *veritas* and *affabilitas* to 'parts' of Justice. I have allowed, too, that some of the sins in the eighth and ninth circle injure the *bonum commune* rather than individuals: but even if we suppose that Dante actually intended to allude to *iustitia generalis* as well as to *iustitia particularis*, this would not conflict with the main part of my interpretation of these circles.

The assumption that all malicious sins are *iniuriae* accounts at once for one or two important features of the *Inferno*. If, for example, there is any ground for asserting that the external side of sin is more prominent in the *Inferno* than in the *Purgatorio*, the evidence must (as Witte practically admitted, cf. Ch. iii, p. 66) come entirely from the circles of Malice. In different ways, Murder, Theft, Hypocrisy, Flattery, and many other sins in those circles seem to throw the *actus exterior* into high relief: and this is explained in a moment when we remember that Justice and Injustice are *circa operationes* or, as it is sometimes expressed, *circa actus exteriores*. We know, however, that *culpa* is always *in sola voluntate*, so that if the injury is intended but unaccomplished the guilt of it is charged to the sinner. Yet there is always this difference between sins *circa passiones* and sins *circa operationes*, that in the former the *finis* never lies in the external act, while in the latter it never lies anywhere else. Hence in the circles of Incontinence there is no point in emphasizing the *actus exterior*, while in the circles of Malice there is no point in supposing it unaccomplished. A sin of Malice is *always* classified by the nature of the external act, a sin of Incontinence *never*.

Another characteristic of the *Inferno* is explained by the reference to Justice. The great frequency of sins involving avarice has often been remarked, and some have thought it strange that, after reserving a special circle for the avaricious (and prodigal), Dante should constantly revert to the same kind of sin in the lower circles. Yet how natural is this recurrence when we remember that *avaritia*[1] (as representing πλεονεξία) is the characteristic of all Injustice. I am not forgetting that the Aristotelian term covers far more than unjust acquisition of money and external goods; nor need we be surprised if some of the malicious sins in the *Inferno* have no financial aspect. But even if we restrict ourselves to the more popular sense of *avaritia*, the number of instances in the *Inferno* is large enough to prove that Injustice tends to the unlawful appropriation of money. Thus among the *violenti* of the seventh circle (first *girone*) are *guastatori, predoni,* and those guilty of *tollette dannose*: in the third *girone* is Usury: in the first *bolgia* of the eighth circle are the *ruffiani*, one of whom, observing that many of his companions come from Bologna, says to Dante:—

> e se di ciò vuoi fede o testimonio,
> recati a mente il nostro avaro seno. (*Inf.* xviii. 62.)

In the third *bolgia* are the *Simoniaci*:—

> O Simon mago, o miseri seguaci,
> chè le cose di Dio, che di bontate
> deono essere spose, e voi rapaci
> per oro e per argento adulterate. (*Inf.* xix. 1.)

In the fifth *bolgia* come the *barattieri*, most plentiful at Lucca:—

> del *no* per li denar vi si fa *ita*. (*Inf.* xxi. 42.)

The seventh *bolgia* is full of *ladri*, and in the tenth are forgers and others whose falsity had money for its goal. Treachery, again, is often associated with money, and Buoso da Duera is a typical case:—

> Ei piange qui l'argento de' Franceschi. (*Inf.* xxxii. 115.)

[1] In one place (*De Mon.* i. 11. 71) Dante uses *cupiditas* as equivalent to πλεονεξία.

At the lowest depth of all is Judas who sold his Master. In all these cases, no doubt, Dante shows his personal detestation of Avarice, but the thought of *avaritia* in the fifth book of the *Ethics* must greatly have assisted him.

Dante's distinction between Force and Fraud arrests the attention of every reader of the *Inferno*, but even professional commentators have failed to observe that Dante would have encountered this distinction nowhere else, or nowhere so prominently, as in relation to Justice: for Aristotle, Cicero, and St. Thomas had all divided the sins of Injustice into two classes according as they were open or secret. As a general rule, I shall not pretend to name the exact source of opinions reflected in the *Divine Comedy*—such a pretence would, in most cases, be only a confession of ignorance—but since many writers have assumed that Dante was only reproducing a statement of Cicero's in the *De Officiis*, it is necessary to remark that Aristotle gives the distinction between Force and Fraud no less clearly and directly than Cicero. I quoted from St. Thomas the doctrine that Injustice, as it occurs in *commutationes involuntariae*, is of two varieties, *quandoque occulte per fraudem*, *quandoque etiam manifeste per violentiam* (*S.* 2. 2. lxi. 3), and there is no shadow of doubt that St. Thomas is alluding there, not to Cicero, but to the fifth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, where Aristotle divides the *commutationes* as follows:—

involuntariarum autem hae quidem occultae, puta furtum, moechia, veneficium, proagogia, servi seductio, dolosa occisio, falsum testimonium; hae autem violentae, puta verberatio, vinculum, mors, rapina . . . (*Eth. Nic.* 1131. a. 5-9.)

In his Commentary St. Thomas refers back to Aristotle's theory of *involuntarium* in the third book. Involuntariness is caused either by *vis* or by *ignorantia* and on this distinction rests the division of *commutationes* into *violentae* and *occultae*:—

quia involuntarium est duplex . . . ideo involuntarias commutationes dividit in occultas, quasi per ignorantiam factas, et in eas quae manifeste per violentiam fiunt. (*Eth.* v. 4.)

The *ignorantia* is in the person defrauded, but he who trades on another's *ignorantia* is himself guilty of *fraus*. The impression that Cicero, to the exclusion of Aristotle, was the dominant influence in the scheme of the *Inferno* has often led to misapprehension, and has suggested to some commentators that the allusion to the *Ethics* in *Inf.* xi. 79 was only to explain a special point in a system otherwise Ciceronian. I have no thought of questioning the familiarity of Dante with Cicero, but it is well to understand that even if he had never heard of the *De Officiis*, the mere distinction between Fraud and Force in the *Inferno* might stand exactly as we have it. At the same time, St. Thomas warns us that Dante would probably assume an agreement between Aristotle and Cicero, and it is quite conceivable that he might select a doctrine chiefly because it was Aristotelian, and then impart to it a Ciceronian colour.

For the moment, however, I will return to the simple fact that Dante would have become familiar with the distinction between Force and Fraud in discussions about the nature of Justice. That this was so with Aristotle is manifest, and we need but glance at the *De Officiis* to see that the famous passage, which, like so many others, I am compelled to quote, comes at the end of a discourse upon Justice:—

> cum autem duobus modis, id est aut vi aut fraude, fiat iniuria, fraus quasi vulpeculae, vis leonis videtur, utrumque homine alienissimum, sed fraus odio digna maiore. Totius autem iniustitiae nulla capitalior quam eorum qui tum, cum maxime fallunt, id agunt ut viri boni esse videantur. De iustitia satis dictum. (*De Off.* i. § 41.)

Such a passage could not possibly occur in Cicero's discussion of any other cardinal virtue, for its whole meaning is relative to Justice; and when we add to the testimony of Aristotle and Cicero that St. Thomas, too, divides *iniuriae* upon this same basis (Ch. xvi, p. 275), it becomes almost an impossibility to put upon *Inf.* xi. 22–4 any other construction but that all sins of pure *malizia* fall under the general head of Injustice.

I will now consider that deliberate verdict of Dante's upon the relative badness of Force and Fraud. His words are:—

Ma perchè frode è dell' uom proprio male,
più spiace a Dio: e però stan di sutto
gli frodolenti, e più dolor gli assale. (*Inf.* xi. 25.)

What was the poet's authority for this judgement? And what was his object in making Force the less iniquitous of the two? I have no intention of reviewing all the philosophers who might be relevant to the former question, and, except for Aristotle and Cicero, whose claims cannot be disregarded, I shall go no further afield than the works of St. Thomas. Now as to Aristotle, the plain fact is that he gives no guidance whatever. Casual expressions may incline this way or that, but at the point in the fifth book of the *Ethics* where Force and Fraud fall asunder, not a word is said to prove that either is morally worse than the other. To Cicero's statement (quoted above) we shall return very shortly, but with regard to St. Thomas, nothing seems to have escaped the critics more completely than that Dante's judgement upon Fraud and Force is a direct contradiction of the *Summa*. Those who imagine that I am over-anxious to bring the *Inferno* into accord with the teaching of St. Thomas will perhaps moderate their suspicion when they learn that, in the deliberate judgement of St. Thomas, injustice perpetrated by Violence is worse than injustice accomplished by Fraud. The evidence is unmistakable, and I will examine first the comparison between *rapina* and *furtum*, which sins are actually selected by St. Thomas as an illustration of the difference between *violentia* and *fraus*. Injustice, when directed *in rem*, can take two forms:—

si occulte unus rem alterius accipiat, vocatur furtum; si autem manifeste, vocatur rapina. (*S.* 2. 2. lxi. 3.)

Afterwards, when the treatment of these sins is developed, comes the question, *utrum furtum sit gravius peccatum quam rapina*, and the first 'objection' is:—

videtur quod furtum sit gravius peccatum quam rapina. Furtum enim super acceptionem rei alienae habet adiunctam fraudem et dolum, quod non est in rapina. Sed fraus et dolus de se habent rationem peccati . . . ergo furtum est gravius peccatum quam rapina.

But St. Thomas answers: —

in furto est involuntarium per ignorantiam, in rapina autem est involuntarium per violentiam. Magis est autem aliquid involuntarium per violentiam quam per ignorantiam, quia violentia directius opponitur voluntati quam ignorantia. Et ideo rapina est gravius peccatum quam furtum. Est et alia ratio, quia per rapinam non solum infertur alicui damnum in rebus, sed etiam vergit in quamdam personae ignominiam sive iniuriam; et hoc praeponderat fraudi vel dolo, quae pertinent ad furtum. (*S.* 2. 2. lxvi. 9.)

The same point is repeated in connexion with *contumelia* and *detractio*: —

gravius peccatum est contumelia quam detractio, inquantum habet maiorem contemptum proximi; sicut et rapina est gravius peccatum quam furtum. (*S.* 2. 2. lxxiii. 3. ad 2.)

But perhaps the clearest expression of principle arises out of a comparison between *litigium* and *adulatio*:—

sicut adulator potest nocere occulte decipiendo, ita litigiosus potest interdum nocere manifeste impugnando. Gravius autem est, ceteris paribus, manifeste alicui nocere, quasi per violentiam, quam occulte. Unde rapina est gravius peccatum quam furtum, ut supra dictum est. (*S.* 2. 2. cxvi. 2. ad 1.)

And just afterwards St. Thomas applies to this case the well-known distinction between *turpiora* and *graviora*:—

turpiora sunt peccata carnalia, quibus caro dominatur rationi, quamvis peccata spiritualia sint graviora, quia procedunt ex maiori contemptu. Similiter peccata quae fiunt ex dolo sunt turpiora, inquantum videntur ex quadam infirmitate procedere et ex quadam falsitate rationis, cum tamen peccata manifesta quandoque sint ex maiori contemptu. (Ibid. ad 2.)

St. Thomas does not assert that all open injuries are worse than all secret ones—for other points might have to be considered—but he does teach that, *ceteris paribus*, the fact of undisguised *contemptus* is worse than the stealthiness of Fraud. The case of *rapina* and *furtum* is typical, and in this very instance Dante disagrees absolutely with St. Thomas. *Rapina* is in the first *girone* of the seventh circle; *furtum* in the seventh *bolgia* of the eighth circle: had St. Thomas been

arranging an Inferno, he would certainly have reversed the positions of the two sins.

To argue that Dante acted in ignorance or forgetfulness of St. Thomas's judgement would be easy; but considering the great importance in the *Inferno* of the decision about Force and Fraud, the safer assumption is that he had some definite reason for deserting the guidance of one whom he was accustomed to treat with the highest respect. Yet I do not renounce my steady conviction that a difference between Dante and St. Thomas upon any fundamental principle of morality is inconceivable; and, without any desire for paradox, I will even assert that Dante never showed himself an apter pupil of St. Thomas than when he declared Fraud to be more iniquitous than Force. In the first place, Aristotle was silent on the question, and, so far as the fifth book of the *Ethics* was an accepted authority, both St. Thomas and Dante could take what course they pleased. Now, as it happens, the argument by which St. Thomas proves *rapina* worse than *furtum* is not ostensibly based on any particular authorities: St. Thomas merely appeals to the principle that *contemptus Dei* or *contemptus proximi* is a characteristic of the worst kind of wickedness. But why did he ignore the passage in the *De Officiis*? It would be ludicrous to pretend that Cicero had no special authority in these matters, and almost equally ludicrous to suggest that St. Thomas had forgotten Cicero's opinion. No, St. Thomas must have intended to differ from Cicero; or, perhaps, the truth is rather that his own reasons for counting Violence worse than Fraud were so different from Cicero's reasons for the opposite opinion, that he did not think it worth while to notice the superficial conflict. In no case would St. Thomas be under any obligation to follow Cicero, and if he thought the statement in the *De Officiis* too difficult to reconcile with his own doctrine, he would adopt the last heroic device of his dialectical method and preserve a diplomatic silence.

And now look at the case of Dante. I assume that he had some reason (even if it was only personal sentiment) for placing Fraud lower in Hell than Force. He would then

consider whether he could express his opinion without clashing with the greater authorities. He would note the silence of Aristotle; he would note the verdict of Cicero; he would note, lastly, that St. Thomas had apparently paid no attention to Cicero. By ignoring the *Summa*, therefore, and by taking his stand on the *De Officiis*, Dante would simply be imitating the method of St. Thomas. He would not be making a moral revolution or casting away fundamental principles, for he was careful to explain that Fraud was more damnable than Force because it was the *proprio male* of man; and this, in effect, was an appeal to a principle always upheld by St. Thomas. The only question is whether Dante did not ingeniously distort the principle for the sake of the design which he intended to carry out. To this question we must now attend.

For the sake of the contrast between St. Thomas and Dante, I have been assuming that Cicero did exercise an influence upon the scheme of the *Inferno* in this matter of Fraud and Force: but now I must point out that the agreement between Dante and the *De Officiis* is so slender that a contentious critic would almost deny its existence. There are one or two minor points of resemblance, as, for instance, between Cicero's *fraus odio digna maiore* and Dante's

> d'ogni malizia ch' odio in cielo acquista. (*Inf.* xi. 22.)

But the use of *odio* needs no reference to Cicero to explain it. It was the merest commonplace of philosophy that the proper object of *odium* was *malum*, and the constant association of the two words is almost inevitable. In the *Convito* Dante says that Justice is the most amiable of virtues, because the most human:—

> e però vedemo che il suo contrario, cioè la ingiustizia, massimamente è odiata. (*Conv.* i. 12. 77.)

Putting this and the line from the *Inferno* together, one might argue, perhaps, that the most hated vice implies the purest form of inward *malizia*—the argument would at least be no worse than one which sees in *odio* an allusion to

Cicero. Again, the words of Guido da Montefeltro are often quoted:—

> l'opere mie
> non furon leonine ma di volpe. (*Inf.* xxvii. 74.)

This is no doubt a reminiscence of Cicero's *leo* and *vulpecula* (*De Off.* loc. cit.), but does it prove more than that Dante had read the *De Officiis*? To argue from a metaphorical expression used by a single sinner that the construction of three whole circles—or even of the whole *Inferno*—may be traced to Cicero is preposterous. Then, as to the far more important fact that Dante divides *iniuriae* into the violent and the fraudulent species, I have shown that in all probability Aristotle was here his chief authority. I am far from wishing to prove that Dante was not influenced by Cicero—for my own argument would gain nothing thereby—but to those who are inclined to trace Dante's appreciation of fraud to Cicero I would observe next that the poet has adapted the doctrine of the *De Officiis* to his purpose only by a remarkable perversion of its meaning. The whole force of Dante's contention lies in the words:—

> Ma perchè frode è dell' uom proprio male,
> più spiace a Dio . . . (*Inf.* xi. 26.)

We cannot, then, refuse to see the implication that violence, as being less perfectly human, issues from that part of human nature which is akin to the lower animals. Now this is exactly what Cicero does *not* say. His words are these:—

> fraus quasi vulpeculae, vis leonis videtur; utrumque homine alienissimum, sed fraus odio digna maiore. (loc. cit.)

The *utrumque* is quite fatal to Dante's argument, for, as regards merely the relation of man to other animals, it puts Force and Fraud upon identically the same level. Cicero says that *both* Force and Fraud are utterly foreign to human nature: Dante says that Fraud is the *proprio male* of man, and thus insinuates that Force is the weapon of beasts. I shall not insist that *homine alienissimum* implies a different conception of moral evil from Dante's; for Dante's own *inumani peccati* (*Conv.* i. 12. 82) is quite compatible with his *proprio male* in

the *Inferno*, and he may have understood Cicero in the same sense. But Cicero's judgement that Fraud is more hateful than Force (as one may hate a fox or a snake more than a lion or a tiger) does not by any means bring the doctrine of the *De Officiis* into agreement with Dante. The grounds of their respective opinions are so different that only by making liberal allowance can they be regarded as other than conflicting. If, then, Dante was indeed making use of Cicero's teaching, why did he choose to modify it as he does? The criticism of Dante himself, however, relates not simply to his use of Cicero but to the *suggestio falsi* in his account of malicious sin. By a clever insinuation he has led his readers to understand that within the province of *malizia* there is room for a more and a less human kind of evil: but, to judge by the standard of St. Thomas's philosophy, and by the doctrine of *malizia* which we have good reason to believe that Dante accepted, such an insinuation is absolutely unwarranted. According to that doctrine, Fraud and Force would be distinguished only in the same sense that the intellect and the intellectual appetite can be distinguished within the *pars rationalis*. Cunning may be the predominant feature of some malicious sins, open *contemptus* of others; but to teach that *intellectus* is more peculiarly human than the *appetitus rationalis* is utterly erroneous, and to make the gravity of sins proportionate to their intellectuality is to renounce the whole doctrine of *culpa*. Intellect does not exist in the lower animals, but is anticipated by sense and imagination: will does not exist in them either, but is foreshadowed by sensual appetite. As for the gravity of sins, this depends upon the extent to which the will is unhampered by false reasoning or passion: Fraud itself touches the highest point of wickedness only when it is purely malicious, or, in other words, when it is caused by *voluntas ipsa ex seipsa*. That Dante knew and accepted this doctrine is sufficiently demonstrated even by those brief expressions, *la parte razionale, cioè la volontà e lo intelletto* (*Conv.* iv. 22. 95), and *giustizia, la quale è solamente nella parte razionale ovvero intellettuale, cioè nella volontà* (*Conv.* i. 12. 72).

Here, however, I can imagine protests and objections.

I shall be told that Dante is only making Fraud peculiar to human beings, as compared with the violent methods of beasts. He compares mental with physical methods, and affirms that the former are more human. But to this there are two replies, (1) that the introduction of *malizia* and *ingiuria* into the argument disposes of any pretence that the physical is being contrasted with the mental, (2) that beasts approach just as nearly to human *frode* as they do to malicious *forza*. There is *vulpecula* and there is *leo*, and, as Cicero said, *utrumque homine alienissimum*. For the truth is, that physical violence is scarcely more than an accident of Dante's *forza*. The sinners in the first *girone* of the seventh circle were undoubtedly men of blood, but in the other two *gironi* physical violence is irrelevant. Blasphemy is not assault and battery, nor is the usurer on a par with the highwayman. Even in the first *girone*, it is manifest that the essence of the sin lies not in the sword and cudgel, but in the intention of openly despising another's rights. To qualify for a place in the seventh circle, the sinner requires a sense of *ius*, and in the eyes of a philosophical critic an infuriated *leo* comes no nearer to the 'violence' of Shylock (as usurer) than a crafty *vulpecula* to the wiles of Iago. Substitute for Shylock the most ruffianly burglar or cutthroat, and even then the infuriated bull or tiger is divided by a great gulf from malicious *forza*. And all this, I protest again, was as familiar to Dante as the alphabet, and that is why I stigmatize his description of Fraud as a *suggestio falsi*. The affinity of man to other animals is found in the *appetitus sensitivus*: but wherever *malitia* is the inward cause and *iniuria* the *finis*, the resemblance to merely animal behaviour is at an end. We may say, then, that Dante (1) contradicts the judgement of St. Thomas upon Fraud and Force, (2) distorts the meaning of Cicero, (3) hints at a doctrine of *malizia* which we cannot believe him to have held. Can such behaviour have been accidental, or was it inspired by some special design? The answer may be obvious to the reader, but it must await its proper time.

The connexion between *malizia* and *ingiustizia*, which has formed the main topic of this chapter, has often been verbally

admitted (e.g. by Scartazzini in his note on *Inf.* xi. 23) ; but the admission means nothing of importance unless it be also understood (1) that in sins of incontinence *iniuria* is assuredly *not* the *finis*; (2) that all sins punished in the three lowest circles are formally to be classified as *iniuriae*. When these propositions are admitted, the foundations of a true understanding of the *Inferno* are laid.

CHAPTER XXI

MALIZIA AND PURGATORY

ALTHOUGH my book professes to deal only with the *Inferno*, it has been apparent since the beginning that the lack of correspondence between Hell and Purgatory is almost the centre of our problem. Why should some of the capital vices be missing in Hell? Why should no malicious sins be mentioned in Purgatory? The few remarks that I propose to offer here upon the latter question are an immediate consequence of the interpretation of *malizia* already given. To my own argument it is certainly indispensable that not even one of the sins punished in the three lowest circles of Hell should be discoverable in Purgatory; for if even one can be detected there, my explanation of the facts must fail. When *peccatum* means no more than *actus inordinatus* there is, indeed, no sort of crime that the capital vices may not bring forth; and, for aught I can urge to the contrary, Manfred himself may have comprised in his *orribili peccati* every known kind of injury to God and man. The sinners in Purgatory may have lied and cheated and murdered to any extent, but it does not follow that Dante would classify them as murderers, swindlers and liars. For whenever he was not prepared to pass the verdict, *ingiuria è il fine*, he would not classify their acts according to outward characteristics, but would refer them to the *finis* of whatever passion had swayed the will of the sinner. The difference between Hell and Purgatory depends, in fact, upon the principle that no sin can be classified until we are acquainted with the inward condition of the agent; and if there are no malicious sins in Purgatory, this must be because all who die in a state of *malizia* are necessarily condemned to Hell. A certain state of will bars the entrance to Purgatory, and certain *peccata* are, in accurate terminology, always associated with that state of will.

At first sight, this view is not likely to be acceptable. I have myself declared (Ch. i, p. 9) that the only vital point of difference between the sinners of Hell and the sinners of Purgatory is that the latter repented of their sins. If, then, Manfred, or any other in Purgatory, was guilty in life of malicious sins, but repented thereafter, why should not the sins be regarded as what they truly were at the time of performance? Here, however, we are reminded of the *peccatum irremissibile* and of the various interpretations discussed by St. Thomas. We noticed that St. Augustine reduced this sin to the fact of *finalis impoenitentia* (Ch. xviii, p. 313), and that St. Thomas, in dissenting from this opinion, was obliged to understand *irremissibile* in a sense not wholly literal. The recognized *peccata contra Spiritum Sanctum* were to him the prime examples of irremissible sins, but in view of Aristotle and the doctrine of *malitia*, he allowed that, in a broad sense, all sins caused by habitual malice were *contra Spiritum Sanctum* (*De Malo*, iii. 14). I must still postpone the discussion of Dante's intentions with regard to theological sins, but on the assumption (cf. Ch. xx, p. 336) that he did not propose visibly to recognize the six sins *contra Spiritum Sanctum*, the moral *peccata ex malitia commissa* would then be the best representatives of unpardonable sins. In other words, malicious injuries are sins that exclude repentance, and thus prevent admission to Purgatory.

The apparent flaw in this explanation is the fact that St. Thomas, at any rate, denies the existence of sins *literally* past forgiveness. If Dante agreed with him in this respect and held that inward malice could never make repentance absolutely impossible, would he not be deprived of his only excuse for shutting malicious sinners out of Purgatory? But we must not overlook the very simple fact that all Dante's sinners had to die before their fate was decided. Were they still *in statu viae* it would be impossible to predict eternal punishment for any of them. No matter how hardened he be in malicious practices, the *liberum arbitrium* of a living man is never *confirmatum in malo*, and there would always be a doctrinal error in asserting that he must inevitably be damned.

But Dante is not called upon to pass so hazardous a verdict. For him it is enough that no sinner who *dies* in a state of impenitence can hope for admission to Purgatory. *Malizia* is an inward condition which, so long as it lasts, is incompatible with repentance: if, then, it last till death overtakes the sinner, he is beyond all question condemned. The remark of Benvenuto da Imola, which Dr. Moore quotes (*Studies in Dante*, 2nd series, note to p. 167), is just near enough to the truth to prove that Benvenuto did not understand the real principle. He says that persons *qui peccant per malitiam raro veniunt ad Purgatorium in vita vel morte* (iii. 354), but he fails to see that, when *mors* has entered upon the scene, it is no longer a case of *raro* but of *nunquam*. Even in the last agony of death the sinner may turn to God, and not in vain; but when the breath is gone forth from the body, and *malitia* is still in the soul, the door of Purgatory closes automatically and the sinner must stand before Minos.

But even now I shall be told that I have not faced the difficulty. For suppose that a man (1) maliciously plots an injury, (2) repents and receives absolution, (3) dies in a state of grace; his penance, if uncompleted in this world, will have to be completed in Purgatory. Why, then, should his sin not be classified as an *iniuria*, even though the *malizia* which caused it was extinct before the hour of death? How can the bare fact of repentance alter the specific character of the sin committed? Now if Dante had *wished* to draw attention to the injuries formerly perpetrated by sinners in Purgatory, he might, I think, have contrived to do so without involving himself in a false doctrine: but the course actually preferred in his poem is far more consonant with the principles of St. Thomas and with the Christian doctrine of penitence. When terms are used with exactness, a sin is not *homicidium* or *furtum* except when *iniuria* is the *finis*. But the effect of contrition and confession is instantaneously to remove the *culpa*, and the very act of penitence shows that *malitia* has ceased to exist. What inference, then, more natural than that the sin itself immediately loses the quality which made it an injury to God or man? A man is a thief, a liar, or a murderer

so long as *malitia* survives in him, but no longer: if, therefore, the inward state of *malitia* can by no possibility enter into Purgatory, would it not, at least, be a grave cause of confusion to place there the sins properly associated with that inward state?

But we have not done with the argument. One might object that by the sacrament of *poenitentia* every shadow of *culpa* is removed, and that henceforward it is not more rational to treat the past sins as sins of incontinence than to reckon them malicious *iniuriae*. But let us consider one or two central doctrines of this sacrament, and bring them into relation with Purgatory. We must bear in mind that the sinners there are enduring both punishment and purification. There is no good reason for opposing these two ideas to each other, or for hinting that in writers of elevated sentiment, like Dante, the notion of retributive punishment was giving way to that of moral purification. For the Christian doctrine of retribution is not that the doer of the *deed* must suffer (a doctrine, we are often told, of the Greek tragedians), but that moral *guilt* must bring its own retribution. Punishment, as St. Thomas would say, is *medicina culpae*: its meaning is not that a pound of flesh must be exacted, but that moral loss must be restored through suffering until the sinner is fit to enter the Divine Presence. That the *guilty* must suffer is not a crude idea surviving from earlier times, but a fundamental law of the moral world, and to separate the idea of purification from the retributive element in punishment is either moral weakness or mental confusion. My reason for insisting upon this point is that, without a grasp of it, we shall not understand the relation of penance to *remissio culpae*, or the condition of sinners in Purgatory.

Now let us start from St. Thomas's question—*utrum, remissa culpa per poenitentiam, remaneat reatus poenae.* St. Thomas returns to his original distinction of two elements in sin, and writes:—

> ex parte ergo aversionis ab incommutabili bono consequitur peccatum mortale reatus poenae aeternae, ut qui contra aeternum bonum peccavit in aeternum puniatur: ex parte etiam conversionis ad bonum commutabile, inquantum est

inordinata, consequitur peccatum mortale reatus alicuius poenae, quia inordinatio culpae non reducitur ad ordinem iustitiae nisi per poenam: iustum est enim ut qui voluntati suae plus indulsit quam debuit, contra voluntatem suam aliquid patiatur: sic enim erit aequalitas. (*S.* 3. lxxxvi. 4.)

Here, then, is a double liability, and the next point is the effect of absolution:—

quando igitur per gratiam remittitur culpa, tollitur aversio animae a Deo, inquantum per gratiam anima Deo coniungitur. Unde et per consequens simul tollitur reatus poenae aeternae: potest tamen remanere reatus alicuius poenae temporalis. (Ibid.)

The last words explain the existence of Purgatory; for Purgatory is but a continuation of penance unaccomplished in this world, and introduces no new principle into the sacrament.

Now if by *remissio culpae* the soul is reunited to God, and yet the *inordinatio* is not atoned for without satisfactory punishment, this does, at first, look like a doctrine of mechanical retribution. But this impression endures only while we imagine that the *coniunctio* of the soul to God, effected by penitence, is an automatic and final purification of every impulse controlled by the will. This, however, is not the meaning of St. Thomas. Repentance does at once reunite the will to God, because the *intentio* is now directed towards the true *finis*: but it does not follow that the passions will never again be inordinately moved by *bona commutabilia*, or that reason will never err *circa ea quae sunt ad finem*. Against this misunderstanding St. Thomas provides by his next question—*utrum, remissa culpa mortali, tollantur omnes reliquiae peccati.* Following the same line, he answers:—

dicendum quod peccatum mortale ex parte conversionis inordinatae ad bonum commutabile quandam dispositionem causat in anima, vel etiam habitum, si actus frequenter iteretur. Sicut autem dictum est, culpa peccati mortalis remittitur inquantum tollitur per gratiam aversio mentis a Deo. Sublato autem eo quod est ex parte aversionis, nihilominus remanere potest id quod est ex parte conversionis inordinatae . . . et ideo nihil prohibet quin, remissa culpa, remaneant dispositiones ex prioribus actibus causatae, quae dicuntur peccati reliquiae. (*S.* 3. lxxxvi. 5.)

Thus in penance, whether on earth or in Purgatory, there is a correspondence between inward and outward. The will is no longer averted from its *finis*, but the sinful disposition is not wholly eradicated: the eternal punishment is remitted, but the temporal has to be suffered. And now look at the words of Statius to Dante:—

> Della mondizia sol voler fa prova,
> che, tutta libera a mutar convento,
> l' alma sorprende, e di voler le giova.
> Prima vuol bene; ma non lascia il talento
> che divina giustizia contra voglia:
> come fu al peccar, pone al tormento.
> (*Purg.* xxi. 61–6.)

The *prima vuol bene* signifies that the *aversio a Deo* is ended: but, recognizing the law of the Divine Justice, the temporary will of the sinner is to fulfil the *tormento* which compensates for sin; for only thus can his soul be purified and the road to Paradise be opened.

But does the doctrine of *reliquiae peccati* make it easier to believe that sins maliciously committed can in Purgatory be otherwise estimated? Unquestionably it does. The survival of *reliquiae peccati* St. Thomas attributes to dispositions or habits, and thus he reminds us that the moral state of *malitia* cannot suddenly come into existence, but must succeed to a condition in which the sinner gives way intermittently to passion but does not, normally, intend what is wrong. In this sense we found it true to say that the capital vices are the cause of all sins, even though no one of the seven can possibly be the final cause of a malicious act. Now when through penitence *malitia* passes away from the soul and the *culpa* is remitted, the will must be thought of as relapsing into its earlier condition. No longer averted from its ultimate end, it is still, in some degree, inordinately converted towards the *bona* which originally seduced it. Penance, therefore, will continue until even those relics of sin are cleansed away, and while the soul is in that condition (either on earth or in Purgatory) we may reasonably affirm that it is suffering punishment for the sins *circa passiones*. Now all sins classified by the

obiecta of passion are summed up in the seven capital vices: therefore all sins recognized in Purgatory must fall under one of those seven heads. In one sense, I fully admit, there are *no* sins in Purgatory: for the whole of the *culpa* is remitted and further relapse is impossible. Yet, whereas *aversio a Deo* (*malitia*) has absolutely vanished, the inordinate *conversio* survives as a relic: therefore the sin which detains the sinner in Purgatory cannot possibly be called an *iniuria*, but can reasonably be named after one of the capital vices. Until the impulses are in perfect harmony with the ultimate intention of the sinner, he pays the penalty for *inanis gloria*, *invidia*, or whichever capital vice it was which originally caused him to sin. I maintain, then, that the law of correspondence between the inward state of the sinner and the classification of the sin holds good in Purgatory exactly as it does in Hell. Of the absence of malicious sins from Purgatory no further explanation is needed, and no better, I believe, could be asked. When St. Thomas is criticizing his own doctrine *de reatu poenae*, he supposes an objector to argue that *remissio culpae* takes away the *macula* from the soul, and that to exact the *debitum poenae* is like giving a medicine after an infirmity is cured. But his answer is:—

> dicendum quod, remota macula, sanatum est vulnus peccati quantum ad voluntatem. Requiritur adhuc poena ad sanationem aliarum virium animae, quae per peccatum praecedens deordinatae fuerunt, ut scilicet per contraria curentur. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxxvii. 6. ad 3.)

This distinction between *voluntas* and *aliae vires animae* explains to a nicety why capital vices are mentioned in Purgatory, and why malicious sins are not.

Hitherto I have taken it almost for granted that no *iniuriae* are to be found in Purgatory, but those who retain an accurate recollection of Dante's seventeenth canto may not feel satisfied that the idea of malicious injury is not contemplated in the description of the three worst capital vices. The doctrine that Love is the source of all virtue and all vice opens with a notice of two kinds of *odio* that are morally impossible—hatred of self and hatred of God—and passes to the following conclusion:—

Resta, se dividendo bene estimo,
che il mal che s'ama è del prossimo, ed esso
amor nasce in tre modi in vostro limo.
(*Purg.* xvii. 112.)

Taken by itself, this passage undoubtedly suggests that *odium proximi* would be an accurate term to apply to the three kinds of sin next described by Dante: and, if this were so, my estimate of the sinners in Purgatory would be falsified. For we know that *odium* as *finis* always implies *malitia* as *causa interior* (Ch. xv, p. 264), and that *odium* is an aspect or element of all *iniustitia*. As soon, however, as we begin to examine the *tre modi* in which the love of *il mal del prossimo* arises, we shall be convinced that of *odium* as an end in itself there is not the slightest trace. Neither the proud, nor the envious, nor the angry are suffering penance for the sin of *odium*: nay, in the two simpler cases, *invidia* and *ira*, the reasons alleged by Dante for the existence of the sins are almost precisely the reasons employed by St. Thomas for distinguishing them from *odium*. Dante says:—

È chi podere, grazia, onore e fama
teme di perder perch' altri sormonti,
onde s' attrista sì che il contrario ama:
ed è chi per ingiuria par ch' adonti
sì che si fa della vendetta ghiotto;
e tal convien che il male altrui impronti.
(*Purg.* xvii. 118.)

St. Thomas says:—

ex parte mali quod appetit convenit peccatum irae cum illis peccatis quae appetunt malum proximi, puta cum invidia et odio; sed odium appetit absolute malum alterius, inquantum huiusmodi; invidus autem appetit malum alterius propter appetitum propriae gloriae: sed iratus appetit malum alterius sub ratione iustae vindictae: ex quo patet quod odium est gravius quam invidia, et invidia quam ira. (*S.* 2. 2. clviii. 4.)

In one or two minor respects, this statement (to which there are numerous parallels) might be supplemented—Dante's *attrista*, for instance, reminds us that *invidia* is defined as *tristitia de bono alieno*—but the main point is indubitable, that *malum inquantum huiusmodi* has nothing to do with Dante's

invidia or *ira*. As to *superbia vel inanis gloria*, Dante does not here group the capital vices according to the method usually preferred by St. Thomas. Moved, perhaps, by the desire for symmetry, and by the thought that Pride was the worst of the seven vices, he associates it with *malum proximi* more directly than with the inordinate pursuit of honour and reputation. The result is that the pilgrim mounting upwards through Purgatory encounters, first of all, three sins which produce *malum proximi*, and then four which have to do with the insufficient or excessive pursuit of various *bona*. St. Thomas, on the other hand, commonly derives *luxuria*, *gula*, *avaritia*, and *inanis gloria* from the three classes of *bona*; and then relates the other three vices, in different ways, to *mala* (Ch. xiv, p. 251). But all these sins are many-sided, and no real difference of opinion is indicated. St. Thomas would readily allow that *inanis gloria* might cause a man to do harm to his neighbours; and Dante, had he chosen, could have emphasized the proud man's desire for excellence. This, indeed, is obvious in the description of the sin:—

> È chi per esser suo vicin soppresso
> spera eccellenza, e sol per questo brama
> ch' e' sia di sua grandezza in basso messo.
>
> (*Purg.* xvii. 115.)

Meanwhile, the *sol per questo* proves conclusively that *malum inquantum huiusmodi* is not the *finis*, and that Pride, therefore, is not malicious *odium*. It is also possible that in describing the gravest of all capital vices Dante was careless of the distinction between *superbia* and *inanis gloria*. I do not mean that he is likely to have denied that *superbia* can be treated as *regina et mater omnium vitiorum* rather than as a capital vice; but I think that Scartazzini and others are right in illustrating Dante's conception of the capital vice by passages from the *Summa* which actually refer to *superbia* in its wider sense. For instance, *superbia* is defined as *inordinatus appetitus propriae excellentiae*, and this might well be applied to Dante's capital vice, even though, strictly, it is applicable to all vices. So again, when St. Thomas writes:—

secundum hoc superbia dicitur esse amor propriae excel-

lentiae, inquantum ex amore causatur inordinata praesumptio alios superandi, quod proprie pertinet ad superbiam (*S.* 2. 2. clxii. 3. ad 4),

he makes a clear opening for one who would bring *superbia*, as capital vice, into relation with *malum proximi*. The object peculiar to *inanis gloria* is far more specialized than *propria excellentia* in general, but many statements about *superbia* can be transferred to *inanis gloria* without visible alteration. The *superbia* that consists in open rebellion against God's law must be sought in Dante's *Inferno* (e. g. in the sin of Capaneo, *Inf.* xiv. 63), but that *superbia* and *inanis gloria* are sometimes almost identical St. Thomas himself would not deny. As to Dante's terminology in the *Purgatorio*, both Omberto (xi. 68) and Oderisi (xi. 88) speak of *superbia*, but the other term is introduced in the exclamation: —

O vana gloria dell' umane posse! (*Purg.* xi. 91.)

In any case, it is certain that the Pride of the lowest cornice in Purgatory is a sin of inordinate passion, not the hardened contempt for God and man which goes along with malicious sin. Just as there are not and cannot be any capital vices in the three lowest circles of Hell, so there are not and cannot be any malicious sins in Purgatory.

CHAPTER XXII

THE CIRCLE OF HERESY

MOUNTING upwards from the circles of Malice we come next upon the rather mysterious region of the heresiarchs. The head and front of whatever mystery does belong to the sixth circle is the bare fact of Dante's silence: for though, on the strength of a casual expression in the *Convito* (ii. 9. 56), some have suggested that the denial of immortality is meant to be a form of *bestialitas*, the suggestion shows such complete disregard of all the philosophy known to Dante that discussion of it is quite superfluous. Dante, then, is silent, and the basis of all further criticism I take to be the single proposition that his silence is not accidental. We often overlook what lies nearest to us, and even search for a thing that we have in our hands, but it is beyond my powers of credulity to believe that Dante could solemnly map out his *Inferno* without perceiving that he had left the position and meaning of a whole circle unexplained. No, his silence must be as deliberate and, in its way, as significant as the plain declaration about *malizia*.

The next question is whether the nature of the scheme disclosed by Virgil affords any hint of a reason for this strange omission. For the moment, I will only remark that the arrangement of all the other circles (save Limbo) turns on the distinction between *malizia* and *incontinenza*. These terms signify two different conditions of will in the sinners, and two grades of culpability: but suppose there is a type of sin which is doubtfully referred either to malice or to incontinence—a sin which is neither *in voluntate* nor yet *in appetitu sensitivo*—how would Dante dispose of this? The nature of the sin punished therein is, in any case, the first point in the examination of the sixth circle: but if that line of inquiry does not wholly solve the problem, there is also the character of Virgil in the

poem. No one doubts that Dante has invested both his guides with some kind of allegorical character; nor is it disputable that the knowledge and power of Virgil have limitations. Whether those limitations can have been discovered even in the *Inferno* is not so certain, but the question is, at least, worth asking before we give rein to mere conjecture.

Dante uses the word *eresiarche* to describe the sinners lying in the fiery tombs, and even if Heresy in its most technical sense should prove to be inapplicable to some of them it would be inexpedient to substitute any other name. For unless we return to the impossible opinion that Heresy, as a secret sin without external expression, would find no place in the Inferno, there is good reason to expect that Dante would mete out some kind of punishment to those who had sinned against *fides*. Moreover, we cannot begin to reflect upon Heresy without facing the whole question of sins against the theological virtues. *Maiori virtuti maius vitium opponitur*, we have read in the *Summa*, and the theological virtues are, without question, greater than the moral. How, then, could any Christian poet construct an Inferno and yet devise no special torments for those who had opposed themselves in the most deadly manner to Christ? Or, if Heresy is actually punished, but all other theological sins omitted, what reason can be shown for this anomaly? One of the best-known facts about the *Inferno* is that the name of Christ is never mentioned there. While the two poets are in Limbo, Virgil is obliged to speak of *Cristianesmo*, and in the same circle Dante makes covert inquiry as to the visit of our Lord after the Crucifixion. In answering, Virgil is careful to omit the actual name, and the same policy is observed throughout the lower circles. A casual use of the adjective *cristiano* is no exception, for it involves no more than the recognition of the Christian society, and steers wide of theological doctrine. Now this omission of the Sacred Name is commonly ascribed to simple reverence, an explanation which might pass as sufficient, did the silence of Dante extend only to a name. But this is emphatically not so. What Dante leaves out is not merely the name of the Saviour but the whole theological presentation of evil. Set aside for a moment the

sixth circle, and you will hardly detect the slightest intimation that any sinner is damned for offending against Christianity as such. Even in Limbo the one fact insisted upon is the necessity of the baptismal rite; all the remaining deficiency in virtuous Pagans being summed up in the vague words:—

> e se furon dinanzi al Cristianesmo,
> non adorar debitamente Dio. (*Inf.* iv. 37.)

This is the solitary allusion (if such it can be called) in the whole *Inferno* to the Christian view of conduct; and here, too, we must remember that Virgil is speaking of those who were not and could not possibly have been Christians. On the other hand, Dante might have gone to the opposite extreme, had he pleased, and reduced all sins to offences against Faith, or Hope, or Charity. That the theological should not swallow up the moral is not surprising, but that Dante should wholly ignore all that is most characteristic of Christianity is, surely, a little remarkable; and we cannot but ask whether this wider silence does not embrace the special silence about the sixth circle.

An opinion has sometimes been put forward that, if Beatrice stands for heavenly wisdom and Virgil for mundane philosophy, we ought not to expect more than a Pagan treatment of morality in the *Inferno*. In one form this opinion is untenable. For the plain objection to distinguishing Pagan and Christian views of *morality* is that no such distinction exists. To say this is not to deny that certain moral conceptions (like that of seven capital vices) originated with Christian writers; but it remains true that, within the proper bounds of *moralis philosophia*, Pagan and Christian views are not essentially distinct; and, for that matter, St. Thomas derives the capital vices from sources as open to Aristotle as to himself. On the other hand, the theological view of sin was necessarily unknown to Aristotle, Virgil, and all other Pagans. If, therefore, we are right in assuming that Christianity is, as far as possible, kept out of sight in the *Inferno*, the most plausible hypothesis must be that all, or nearly all, sinners can be damned on the moral level, and that the theological aspect of sin can be treated as secondary. And if we ask, once more,

why Dante should desire to stow away Christianity in the background, I can produce no better reason than that *il freno dell' arte* would constrain him to make that portion of the unseen world where Virgil is competent to act as guide a mirror of the moral philosophy which Virgil is supposed to represent. I do not for a moment admit that Dante composed his *Inferno* from any but a Christian standpoint: to pretend that he would absolutely omit a sin because it was theological would, I believe, be as foolish as the opinion of Witte about sins of the heart; but I suggest that where the same mortal sin had both a moral and a theological aspect, Dante would prefer to emphasize the moral; and, as a corollary, I should anticipate some kind of failure in Virgil if ever he should encounter a sin which could not be reduced to the moral plane.

I have nothing new or startling to say about Dante's Virgil, but I must begin by running over the few passages in which Virgil confesses his own defective knowledge. Even in the *Inferno* Dante receives intimations that Beatrice will afterwards explain to him things obscure to a less perfect vision, and thus we are not surprised in Purgatory to hear, for instance, that the philosophical account of *libero arbitrio* must be supplemented by faith:—

> Quanto ragion qui vede
> dirti poss' io; da indi in là t' aspetta
> pure a Beatrice, ch' opera è di fede.
> (*Purg.* xviii. 46.)

A similar limit is implied in Virgil's explanation of Dante's pilgrimage:—

> Ond' io fui tratto fuor dell' ampia gola
> d' inferno per mostrargli, e mostrerrolli
> oltre, quanto il potrà menar mia scuola.
> (*Purg.* xxi. 31.)

Finally, at the entrance of the Earthly Paradise, Virgil declares that his power of discerning the road is at an end:—

> E disse: 'Il temporal foco e l' eterno
> veduto hai, figlio, e sei venuto in parte
> dov' io per me più oltre non discerno.'
> (*Purg.* xxvii. 127.)

To this we have a curious and interesting parallel in the *De Monarchia*. Dante is explaining (after the manner of the *Liber de Causis*) how man alone is on the horizon between corruptible and incorruptible things, and how, in consequence of this ambiguous position, there are two grades of beatitude:—

duos igitur fines Providentia illa inenarrabilis homini proposuit intendendos; beatitudinem scilicet huius vitae, quae in operatione propriae virtutis consistit, et per terrestrem Paradisum figuratur; et beatitudinem vitae aeternae . . . ad quam propria virtus ascendere non potest, nisi lumine divino adiuta, quae per Paradisum coelestem intellegi datur. Ad has quidem beatitudines, velut ad diversas conclusiones, per diversa media venire oportet. Nam ad primam per philosophica documenta venimus, dummodo illa sequamur, secundum virtutes morales et intellectuales operando. Ad secundam vero per documenta spiritualia . . . dummodo illa sequamur, secundum virtutes theologicas operando, Fidem, Spem scilicet et Caritatem. (*De Mon.* iii. 16. 43.)

How valuable is this illustration of the *Divine Comedy* may be seen by merely writing down two columns:—

earthly beatitude,	heavenly beatitude,
terrestrial Paradise,	celestial Paradise,
moral and intellectual virtues,	theological virtues,
philosophy,	inspired knowledge.

We remember at once that Virgil, because the Faith is past his comprehension, conducts his scholar only as far as the Earthly Paradise, and there leaves him to await the coming of Beatrice, who alone can raise him to the heavenly spheres: nor can we easily avoid the inference that, so long as Virgil is Dante's moral instructor, the distinctness and pre-eminence of vices opposed to the theological virtues cannot well be allowed to appear. The existence of *le tre sante virtù* (*Purg.* vii. 34) is well known to Virgil, and he knows, too, that it is for lack of these that the door of Heaven is closed against himself; but his understanding of them is no deeper than of any other part of the Christian Faith, and Dante, as an artist, would naturally prefer to give to all kinds of wickedness in Hell, and even in Purgatory, a form suitable to moral philosophy, and therefore intelligible to Virgil.

Besides actual confessions of imperfection, we ought also to take account of some incidents in the journey through Purgatory which, though belonging primarily to the *senso litterale* of the story, are susceptible of the allegorical interpretation for which Dante has bidden us search. The knowledge required to explain the general plan of Purgatory and the order of the capital vices is not lacking to Virgil; for the philosophy of Love in the seventeenth canto is set forth with perfect mastery of principle, and the language there employed is a strong piece of evidence that Dante intended to leave all the capital vices upon the moral level. His *invidioso* is, so to speak, a moral rather than a theological figure, and his *accidioso* is merely one who moves too languidly towards that supreme good which, not the Christian only, but every man *confusamente apprende*. Virgil, therefore, has a perfect right to derive from unillumined reason the catalogue and system of capital vices; and whenever he mounts from one cornice to another he knows the name and character of the vice represented there without needing to ask of others. Nevertheless, Virgil is never quite at home in Purgatory, and his dependence upon others increases as the pilgrims mount higher and higher. At the foot of the mountain he says to the spirits:—

> Voi credete
> forse che siamo esperti d' esto loco;
> ma noi siam peregrin come voi siete.
> (*Purg.* ii. 61.)

He is assisted by other spirits in the fourth canto (iv. 18), by Sordello in the seventh, by angels at various points of passage (e. g. xii. 92), and, most of all, by Statius (xxi. seq.). Much of this, no doubt, is merely part of the external story; for Virgil had never before been in Purgatory, whereas in the *Inferno* Dante very ingeniously makes him say that, conjured once by *quell' Eriton cruda*, he had descended right down to the *cerchio di Giuda* (*Inf.* ix. 27), and thus had learned the way. Still, there is a Christian atmosphere about Purgatory. None can enter there but by the benefit of a sacrament, and all who are purifying themselves are versed in Christian doctrine. Probably, therefore, Virgil's need of direction is a symbol

of his theological deficiency. The moral structure of Purgatory is intelligible to him, but its higher meaning is veiled.

But is there anything in the *Inferno* analogous to these incidents of Purgatory? We shall remember that Virgil asks the Centaur Chiron for a guide (*Inf.* xii. 93), and that afterwards, in the *bolgia* of the *barattieri*, the devils mislead him, so that he is forced to descend by a headlong route to the college of the Hypocrites, and there has to ask his way (*Inf.* xxi. 106 and xxiii. 127). Nevertheless, Virgil asserts roundly that he knows the way through Hell—

Ben so il cammin: però ti fa sicuro (*Inf.* ix. 30),

and perhaps the above incidents have no allegorical meaning, unless the contrast between the *scorta fida* (xii. 100), supplied by the Centaur, and the deceitful devils of the lower region is meant to symbolize the difference between Force and Fraud. It would not, I think, be reasonable to attribute Virgil's ignorance of these small matters to his lack of Christian knowledge. But then comes the difficult instance. For at the very place where Virgil is assuring Dante that he knows the way, he has, in fact, been checked at the gate of the city of Dis: nor can he force an entrance until the messenger from Heaven comes to the rescue. At the same juncture occurs the mention of Medusa and the Gorgon's head, and Dante expressly bids his reader look for the doctrine hidden—

sotto il velame degli versi strani. (*Inf.* ix. 63.)

With good reason, therefore, have commentators assumed that Virgil fails through some defect in knowledge, and no interpretation can be half so probable as that philosophy without theology is incompetent to deal with Heresy and some kinds of unbelief. The Heresiarchs lie immediately within the gate of Dis, and the temporary impotence of Virgil is quite naturally referred to the special nature of their sin.

But if Dante does indeed recognize the sins of *infidelitas* and *haeresis*, why does he allow no similar prominence to other theological sins? The answer (already and so often anticipated) must be that the characteristic sin against *fides* is the only one which cannot be represented in a moral form. Wherever the

spiritual overlaps the moral, and only, as it were, brings the sinner before a higher tribunal, Dante would appraise the sin by the moral standard, because this would be most in keeping with the character of Virgil. But the sins of *infidelitas* and *haeresis* cannot thus be treated, for Aristotle and the moral philosophers had never conceived of a sin residing in the *intellectus speculativus*.

Let us consider, however, whether there are any other points in the *Inferno* at which theological sins are bound to emerge. First of all, there is the twilight region of Limbo, where Virgil and other noble spirits of antiquity are destined to remain. Here the existence and need of theological virtues is clearly acknowledged, for those who dwell there were guilty of no moral sin:—

> Or vo' che sappi, innanzi che più andi,
> ch' ei non peccaro . . . (*Inf.* iv. 33.)

So says Virgil, and almost insinuates that, when theological sin does not presuppose moral, there is no genuine *peccatum*. Be this as it may, we must be careful to understand that Virgil and his companions lacked *all three* theological virtues. The opinion, sometimes advanced, that sins against *fides*, *spes*, and *caritas* are located in three different parts of the Inferno is refuted by Dante himself, when he puts into the mouth of Virgil the lines descriptive of Limbo:—

> Quivi sto io con quei che le tre sante
> virtù non si vestiro, e senza vizio
> conobber l' altre, e seguir tutte quante.
> (*Purg.* vii. 34.)

I do not mean that sins against theological virtues could not be found outside Limbo, but I do mean that the Pagan saints, in lacking Faith, lacked also Hope and Charity. All three stand and fall together: all require the infusion of Grace, which was denied to Pagans; and even in baptized Christians the three cannot be separated, except that *spes* and *fides*, in an inchoate form, are said to be possible *sine caritate* (*S.* 1. 2. lxv. 4).

But what of Virgil's words, *ei non peccaro*? For a moment, perhaps, it may flash upon us that theological sins are thus

disposed of. For it does, surely, follow that all sinners in circles lower than Limbo were guilty on earth of moral sins and are suffering the reward of these. Why then trouble further about the theological side of sin? The solution is tempting, but it must be rejected. For the existence of Limbo is a concession to the excellence or innocence of those who were *not* Christians: it does not touch the case of Christians who fall into *infidelitas* or *haeresis*. As a devout and loyal Catholic, Dante cannot have escaped the thought that a Christian who becomes an infidel or a heretic sins unmistakably against *fides*. Moral causes for these sins there might always be, but their theological character could not possibly be ignored. To me, at least, it is obvious that Dante has simply reproduced in the *Inferno* the view of *infidelitas* supplied by St. Thomas. I do not affirm that he consciously took it from St. Thomas, but I do maintain that the sixth circle owes its unexplained position to the fact that moral philosophy, which Virgil represents, makes no provision for any sin which is *in intellectu speculativo sicut in subiecto*. Moral perfection, combined with theological deficiency, is allowed for in Limbo: where moral sin had been committed Dante would suppress the theological aspect: but the sin against *fides* cannot possibly be moralized; nor, I imagine, would Dante have laid himself open to the charge of making a Hell with no heretics in it. If a man is guilty of Lust, Anger, Avarice, Murder, Treachery, or any kind of moral sin, Dante can find a place for him, and no one would complain if he failed to note that these sins were *contra caritatem*. Even sins against Hope (*desperatio* and *praesumptio*) could easily slide on to the moral level, and we have seen already how Dante takes from *schisma* and *scandalum* all that makes them peculiarly Christian (Ch. xx, p. 344). But with Heresy there were only two alternatives, (1) to omit it altogether, (2) to make it isolated and, in a sense, extraneous to the moral scheme of the *Inferno*. The former course was impossible for a good Catholic: the latter is actually adopted, and is embodied in the circle of the Heresiarchs.

Yet even in that circle, Dante does his best to disguise the

more purely Christian forms of *infidelitas*. The whole of the tenth canto is taken up by the interview with Farinata and the magnificent episode of Cavalcanti: but the sin of Farinata, of *lo secondo Federico*, and, presumably, of the *più di mille* who lie around them, barely falls within the terms *infidelitas* or *haeresis*. Of this company Virgil says:—

> Suo cimitero da questa parte hanno
> con Epicuro tutti i suoi seguaci,
> che l' anima col corpo morta fanno. (*Inf.* x. 13.)

The mention of Epicurus is very ingenious, for it seems at once to bring these sinners within the scope of Virgil's knowledge. It matters not that the term 'Epicureans' had a contemporary significance: the name serves Dante's purpose, and we cannot but reflect that Epicurus himself could have had no right to the designation of Heretic. Moreover, St. Thomas and his contemporaries believed that the immortality of the soul could be proved by philosophical reasoning—for I hardly need observe that the doctrine peculiar to Christianity is not the immortality of the soul but the resurrection of the body. If, then, Virgil stands for human reason, and if reason can demonstrate the immortality of the soul, we might almost be surprised that he could not by his own powers enter the city of Dis. But there are other facts to be considered. Granting that Aristotle and others were ready to prove immortality, they would do it by aid of the *intellectus speculativus*, and failure to understand or accept the proof would certainly not be a moral *sin*. Hence, if Dante wished to punish the Epicureans, he would still be obliged to treat their sin as *infidelitas* or *haeresis*. Again: I believe that Dante does intend to include genuine heretics in the sixth circle. He shows his consummate art by thrusting Farinata and the Epicureans into the foreground, and so making the situation intelligible to Virgil, but when he says—

> Qui son gli eresiarche
> co' lor seguaci d' ogni setta, e molto
> più che non credi son le tombe carche
> (*Inf.* ix. 127.

the *ogni setta* is decisive. Such words can only imply that all the well-known heresies are punished in the sixth circle. And then, too, there is Pope Anastasius—

lo qual trasse Fotin della via dritta. (*Inf.* xi. 9.)

No words could well be vaguer, but every instructed reader would know that Dante was accusing Anastasius of Heresy pure and simple. For Virgil to dwell upon Arianism or Nestorianism or Sabellianism would have been inartistic, not to say impossible; and because he is *not* competent to discuss such subjects the devils bar the door against him: yet Dante makes his tribute to the allegorical character of Virgil by hiding away true *haeresis* in the corner and placing the Epicureans on the stage. It is just possible that in painting the character of Farinata, Dante intended to combine the sin against *spes* with the sin against *fides*. For, as St. Thomas says, *proprium et principale obiectum spei est beatitudo aeterna* (*S.* 2. 2. xvii. 2), and by the denial of immortality Farinata must repudiate the hope of everlasting felicity. From another point of view Farinata might well represent *praesumptio*. Very probably, however, Dante had no defined intention of alluding to sins opposed to *spes*, for there is no absolute reason why these or, again, the sins against *caritas* should oblige him to pass beyond moral philosophy to theology.

Once more: Dante may or may not have remembered the method of estimating sins as *in Patrem*, *in Filium*, or *in Spiritum Sanctum*; but he can scarcely have forgotten the famous saying of our Lord about the unpardonable sin, and it would naturally occur to him that this gravest of all sins ought to be punished in his Inferno. But here again the reduction of the theological to the moral would not be difficult. St. Thomas comes very near to the admission that a sin is irremissible when it is caused by *malitia* (Ch. xviii, p. 315). In the case of the six *peccata contra Spiritum Sanctum* the *malitia* is not caused by habit, and thus far they differ from moral sins. But Dante might fairly reflect that *large loquendo* all malicious sins were *contra Spiritum Sanctum* (loc. cit.), and I cannot think that orthodoxy would compel him

to represent the *peccatum irremissibile* in a more theological way. On the whole, therefore, the most reasonable conclusions about the sixth circle seem to be, (1) that Dante wished to make the scheme of the Inferno suitable to the character and knowledge of Virgil; (2) that, nevertheless, he did not propose to omit any sin that a good Catholic must condemn; (3) that, in practice, all sins could be presented in a moral form save only the sin against *fides*; (4) that even with this sin he laid as little stress as possible upon theological errors, and as much as possible upon the Pagan character of Farinata's philosophy.

I have not yet pretended to explain either the geographical situation of the sixth circle or Dante's silence about the moral status of its inhabitants. Being within the city of Dis, this region is separated from the sins of incontinence; but its separation from the circles of Malice is equally clear. And why should Virgil's ignorance of revealed truth oblige him to keep silence upon this point? If he knows of the existence of baptism, the theological virtues, heresy, and many other facts connected with Christianity, why should he be unable to explain the mere situation of the heretics in the Inferno?

The actual position of the sixth circle is far from inexplicable—so far, indeed, that I will go to the length of asserting that no other position would be possible. For the sin of this circle is the sin of the *intellectus speculativus*, and therefore belongs to the *pars rationalis* of the human soul, not to the *appetitus sensitivus*. On the other hand, it is a sin that reminds us of the distinction between *intellectus* and *voluntas*, and certainly is not *in voluntate sicut in subiecto*. These facts Dante represents in the concrete when he places the heretics within the city of Dis, yet outside the circles of Malice. But why should Virgil be silent? He was silent, I reply, not because he was Virgil, but because Dante himself did not know what to say about the moral cause of heresy. And here we reap some reward for the tiresome intricacies of the argument concerning *ignorantia* as cause of sin (Chs. xii and xiii). Roughly speaking, our conclusion was that *ignorantia*, as cause,

scarcely pointed to a special class of sins, and certainly not to a special grade of culpability. A sin may, in a sense, be caused by intellectual deficiency, but such deficiency (if culpable) must be caused either by *infirmitas* (including *negligentia*) or by *malitia*. Now this is exactly the difficulty about the sixth circle. Heresy is a sin of the speculative intellect, but Heresy is also culpable. Those who, like Virgil himself, lacked Christian truth through *ignorantia invincibilis* are in Limbo, but Farinata and Anastasius were responsible for their speculative errors, and their responsibility must have been either complete or partial, according as their error was wanton or mitigated by passion. In other words, their sin was caused either by incontinence or by malice—for no third alternative exists. On the other hand, there are weighty, not to say fatal, objections to classing sins of the intellect with either incontinent or malicious acts. For owing to the extreme rigidity of mediaeval distinctions between one *potentia* and another, and in view of the doctrine that an act is classified by its *finis*, we cannot well attribute *infidelitas* either to passion or to malice without denying, in effect, that it is *in intellectu sicut in subiecto*. For though in an external sense *any* act may be caused either by passion or by malice, no sins can be *generically* sins of infirmity unless seated *in appetitu sensitivo*, and none *generically* malicious unless seated *in voluntate*. Thus *ira* and *avaritia*, for instance, are always sins of incontinence, and *iniustitia* always a sin of malice. But what can be said of *infidelitas*? For its *subiectum* is neither the will nor the lower appetite: hence, if you call it either a sin of malice or a sin of incontinence its specific character will vanish. When St. Thomas is asked whether *infidelitas* is caused by any capital vice, he replies, rather vaguely, that it might be caused by *inanis gloria vel superbia*, but doubts if theological sins ought to be referred to capital vices (Ch. xviii, p. 310). This was exactly the question, or part of the question, that confronted Dante. Heresy must somehow be referred to the agency of the will, but the dichotomy of incontinence and malice was insufficient. Yet there was no third degree of culpability and, therefore, no refuge but silence. I repeat, then, that Dante is silent for the

simple reason that he knows not what to say. He perceives the problem but cannot solve it, and, like St. Thomas, he avoids the issue.

For all this, the situation of the sixth circle is obviously the right one, and I believe that the badness of Heresy, relatively to other sins, was easily determined by Dante, even though he could not allude to malice and incontinence. For, on the one hand, a sin proper to the speculative intellect must be worse than any sin of the lower appetite; and, on the other hand, no sin reaches the lowest depth of wickedness unless *voluntas ipsa ex seipsa* is its *subiectum* and inward cause. Heresy would, therefore, come between sins of incontinence and sins of malice. Again, if Dante had intended openly to recognize theological sins in the *Inferno*, he could not well have placed *infidelitas* and *haeresis* anywhere but in the sixth circle. No theological virtue resides in the *appetitus inferior*: therefore no theological vice could be located in the circles of Incontinence. On the other hand, the sin against *fides* is less grave than *odium Dei*, the characteristic sin against *caritas* (Ch. xviii, p. 310). True, the rank of sins against *spes* is rather doubtful (loc. cit.), but *spes* is *in voluntate*, and even the conventional order of the three virtues would be almost enough to place *desperatio* between *infidelitas* and *odium*. From every point of view the situation of the sixth circle is correct and intelligible: the only matter that baffles Dante is the relation of Heresy to incontinence and malice.

There remains a word to be said about the absence of Heresy from Purgatory. If the principle of my argument about malicious sins be accepted, we shall understand that the same reasons which exclude all mention of *iniuriae* in Purgatory must operate with almost greater force in the case of Heresy. No one who *dies* an infidel or a heretic can possibly be admitted to Purgatory, for by his own act he has cut himself off from the body of Christ's Church (cf. Moore, *Dante Studies*, 2nd series, p. 176). Suppose, however, that a man falls into one of these sins but repents and is absolved before death; then, if a continuation of his penance be necessary after death, his place in Purgatory will depend upon the capital vice

which originally led him into sin. Had Dante particularly desired to make mention of any penitent heretic, he would probably have selected *inanis gloria* (or possibly *acedia*) as the cause. As it is, we have no reason to be surprised if no such person is encountered in Purgatory ; nor, in any case, would the name of Heresy have been applied to the sin.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE CIRCLES OF INCONTINENCE

THE four circles hitherto examined have this important fact in common, that the sinners assigned to them are, by the very nature of their sin, without parallel in Purgatory. On the other hand, there is every reason for demanding some kind of correspondence between the seven cornices of Purgatory and the infernal region outside the city of Dis. Limbo, indeed, does not concern us, but the circles between Limbo and the Heretics contain all the sins of incontinence, and these are the same sins that, in Purgatory, are reduced to the seven capital vices. The totality of moral evil should, therefore, be the same in one case as in the other, but in saying this I do not affirm that Dante was bound to name in the *Inferno* exactly the same seven vices as in Purgatory. On the contrary, my first point is that, if Dante had intended to construct any part of Hell upon the basis of the capital vices, he would have allotted a separate circle to each of the seven; or would, at least, have taken pains to make each of them visible and distinct. And since no one can pretend that he has done this, the only possible conclusion is that the number of capital vices missing in the *Inferno* is not two nor three but *seven*. All and none are the only two alternatives, and the facts allow us to choose only the latter.

It seems a bold step, however, to dismiss all the capital vices from the *Inferno* when *luxuria*, *gula*, *avaritia*, and *ira* are staring us in the face. But these vices, I believe, are found in the *Inferno* not because they are capital but because they were common to all the moral systems with which Dante was acquainted. Similarly, the absence of *acedia*, *invidia*, and *inanis gloria* must be explained, not by assuming, with Witte, that God behaves like an inferior schoolmaster, nor by any

division of the capital vices into two classes, but by reference to some writer or writers to whom the bare conception of capital vices was absolutely unknown. That Dante does not found the scheme of the *Inferno* upon the capital vices is by no means a novel suggestion ; but the advocates of this opinion have usually fallen into one of two errors. Either they have believed some of the capital vices to be unsuitable to the *Inferno*, or they have supposed that, for the sake of variety or for some other reason, Dante might in two parts of his poems employ two radically distinct moral systems. Regarding both these views as impossible, I would urge (1) that there ought to be an identity of principle and an identity of content between the seven cornices of Purgatory and the four circles of Incontinence, (2) that such identity is quite compatible with the disappearance in Hell of some of the vices recognized in Purgatory. For our study of St. Thomas has taught us that Aristotle, Cicero, and many other writers were supposed to authorize one and the same moral system, even though their lists of virtues and vices were strangely various. Whether a solution of the problem can be reached on these lines remains to be seen, but on no others, I believe, is there even a hope of understanding Dante. The mere feeling of monotony, the almost inconceivable dullness of parading twice through the same seven gradations, would, I imagine, incline Dante to avail himself of any variety in the representation of moral evil that sound philosophy might countenance : and if he thought such variety practicable, one cannot be surprised if he thought the capital vices more appropriate to Purgatory than to Hell. They were not, indeed, a theological invention, but only Christian writers had formally tabulated them, and one or two of them hardly reached their full stature until they were contrasted with Christian ideals of goodness. Moreover, Purgatory was to contain no *iniuriae* nor any sins committed *ex malitia* : that is to say, the capital vices would include the *whole* of the sins named in Purgatory, but only a *part* of those punished in Hell. Considering, then, that the theory of both *malitia* and *iniustitia* was derived mainly from Pagan authors, Dante would most easily make the scheme of his Inferno harmonious if he

treated the sins of incontinence in a manner recommended by philosophers who had also systematized the sins of malice.

Now if we are to look to ancient philosophy for the required explanations, and if we ask which philosopher has the strongest claim, no answer is possible but Aristotle. For, to say nothing of general eulogy, Aristotle is the sole authority named by Dante himself in connexion with the *Inferno*. The direct appeal to the *Ethics* in *Inf.* xi. 80, followed, as it is, by the mention of the *Physics* in line 101, lays a clear obligation upon the critic. He is not bound to assume that Aristotle alone influenced Dante: he is at liberty to come to any conclusion warranted by the facts: but by every rule of sound criticism he is bound to look at Aristotle first. We must remember that the majority of those who have dismissed Aristotle with small compunction have done so because they believed the distinction of *forza* and *frode* to be Ciceronian, whereas our examination of St. Thomas has shown that this distinction may just as well have been derived from Aristotle. Under these circumstances, no other course is open to us but to inquire first how far the mediaeval Aristotle will carry us towards an understanding of the circles of Incontinence. Yet the warning conveyed to us by our analysis of a passage from the *Convito* must not be forgotten (Ch. xix, p. 326 ff.); for if Dante could there make a solemn declaration in favour of Aristotle and then proceed to sketch the moral life in a way far from Aristotelian, he may have done the same in the *Inferno*. There are, in fact, illustrations in the *Divine Comedy* of the puzzling way in which Dante can allude to Aristotle. In the fourth circle of the Inferno, the *avari* and the *prodighi* are punished together because they both failed to observe due *misura* in their expenditure, and Virgil speaks of the *colpa contraria* which separates the two parties (*Inf.* vii. 45). This would seem to imply that the doctrine of the Mean is recognized in the *Inferno*, and that each virtue has due *nemici collaterali* (*Conv.* iv. 17. 65). But where else in the *Inferno* can one find the slightest indication that Dante has placed in the same circle the two opposite or collateral vices? True, there are some who think that the *tristi* of *Inf.* vii. 121 repre-

sent *defectus irae*, but I shall hope to show before long that this view is incorrect. What, then, is the truth about the doctrine of the Mean? Is it recognized in the *Inferno* or not? Or turn to the *Purgatorio* and see how the same doctrine recurs there. When Statius has explained that his own sin was not Avarice but Prodigality, he adds:—

> E sappi che la colpa che rimbecca
> per dritta opposizione alcun peccato
> con esso insieme qui suo verde secca.
>
> (*Purg.* xxii. 49.)

Are we to infer, then, that this doctrine is exemplified in every cornice of Purgatory? Is it an accident or a significant fact that both in Hell and in Purgatory there is only one clear example, that of Prodigality and Avarice? Or is the incident in Purgatory dragged in only to absolve Statius from the charge of Avarice? I shall not here attempt to answer these questions, but the possibility of asking them does prove that reference to an Aristotelian doctrine does not always remove obscurity. Nevertheless, I still maintain that the claims of Aristotle must be fully considered before we seek for other authorities.

Neither Aristotle nor any other ancient philosopher had made it his primary object to formulate a catalogue of vices; but virtues imply contrary vices, and, on the assumption that Dante intended to construct his Inferno in accordance with systems known to the allegorical Virgil, his natural course would be to start from the moral virtues enumerated by Aristotle, or whichever philosopher he preferred, and thus arrive at the vices to be punished in the several circles. Suppose, then, that he did pursue this method, and that he selected Aristotle as his model; what would be the result? As compared with Purgatory, the Inferno seems to lack the three vices, *invidia*, *acedia*, and *inanis gloria*; but in relation to Aristotle the three cannot be kept in one group. *Inanis gloria* I will postpone for the present, but the absence of *acedia* and *invidia* I should account for by the very simple fact that neither of them enjoys in the *Nicomachean Ethics* the formal status of a vice. *Acedia* is the easier case, for Aristotle had

never heard of it. *Invidia*, on the other hand, he regards as always reprehensible, but he classes it with *passiones*, not with *habitus*, and does not oppose it to any one of his regular virtues. At first sight, this explanation is not likely to be acceptable, for Dante must have been accustomed to regard *invidia* as a vice, and St. Thomas had delicately emended Aristotle's doctrine in this respect. Nevertheless, I believe that, if Dante chose to follow the literal teaching of Aristotle, he had every right to do so. In the first place, the mere authority of St. Thomas would not bind Dante—for he disregards it in the far more momentous question of *forza* and *frode*—and, secondly, we must remember that, in order to raise *invidia* to the level of the vices, St. Thomas was obliged to convert both *nemesis* and *misericordia* into virtues (*S.* 2. 2. xxx. 3. ad 4.). Now Dante tells us curiously little in the moral portions of the *Convito* about his estimate of *invidia*, but he is almost emphatic in insisting that *misericordia* is not a vice but a passion. I will refer to three or four passages, taking them simply in the order of their occurrence. The first is in the nature of a commentary upon line 46 of the *Canzone* prefixed to *Convito* ii:—

Mira quant' ella è pietosa ed umile.

Dante compares *pietosa* with the Virgilian epithet of Aeneas, and says:—

non è pietà quella che crede la volgare gente, cioè dolersi dell' altrui male; anzi è questo un suo speziale effetto, che si chiama misericordia, ed è passione. Ma pietade non è passione, anzi è una nobile disposizione d' animo, apparecchiata di ricevere amore, misericordia, e altre caritative passioni. (*Conv.* ii. 11. 39.)

A passage in the third book is interesting only because it mentions *invidia* and quotes directly from Aristotle. Dante speaks of the

sei passioni proprie dell' anima umana, delle quali fa menzione il Filosofo nella sua *Rettorica*, cioè grazia, zelo, misericordia, invidia, amore e vergogna. (*Conv.* iii. 8. 83.)

In the fourth book Dante is actively concerned with virtues and laudable passions. In the *Canzone* he writes:—

È gentilezza dovunque è virtute,
ma non virtute ov' ella ;
siccome è 'l cielo dovunque è la stella,
ma ciò non è converso. (101–4.)

The whole point of the simile lies in the distinction between virtues and other praiseworthy conditions of the soul. The heavens extend through all the spaces between the stars, and in the same way *nobiltate* is wider than virtue:—

Chè veramente è cielo, nel quale molte e diverse stelle rilucono: riluce in essa le intellettuali e le morali virtù, riluce in essa le buone disposizioni da Natura date, cioè pietà e religione, e le laudabili passioni, cioè vergogna e misericordia e altre molte; riluce in essa le corporali bontadi, cioè bellezza, fortezza e quasi perpetua valitudine. (*Conv.* iv. 19. 36.)

In the *Convito*, then, Dante is at pains to insist that *misericordia* is less than a virtue, and it is not an unfair inference that he would have counted *invidia* less than a vice. That he would take the same view in the *Inferno* is far from certain, and I freely acknowledge that, had he preferred to treat *invidia* as a vice, he would have done so with as little scruple in Hell as in Purgatory. But this is not the point. What mental process Dante actually passed through no one can tell, but if he had been called upon to display the intellectual foundations of the *Inferno*, he would have said, I believe, that the vices punished in the second, third, fourth, and fifth circles were those proper to the *appetitus sensitivus*; that respectable writers had differed greatly in their lists of vices *circa passiones*, but that Aristotle was, in his eyes, the most trustworthy guide. Now Aristotle knew nothing of *acedia* and had treated *invidia* as only a culpable passion. Perhaps these sins would be natural accompaniments of vices actually named in the *Ethics*, but, in any case, no educated person would care to say that Aristotle's account of moral evil was inadequate. Let it be remembered, too, that St. Thomas himself, though he derived all the capital vices from an analysis of the lower appetite, did not oppose *invidia* and *acedia* to any moral virtue, but only to Charity (*S.* 2. 2. xxxv and xxxvi). I will even assert that, if St. Thomas had been

a poet, he would not have scrupled to fashion an Inferno wherein neither *invidia* nor *acedia* should obtain a special place of torment. Nay, I believe St. Thomas would offer you half a dozen different Infernos, and be prepared to defend them all against criticism. To us it seems irrational that *invidia*, if recognized in Purgatory, should be suppressed in Hell: but to Dante, I believe, it was merely a question of choosing one out of several possible representations of the same facts, and if it suited him to be almost pedantically Aristotelian we have no cause to be amazed. Does Aristotle give a sufficient account of virtues and vices? Unless we think that Dante would have answered this question in the negative, the absence of *invidia* and *acedia* can be explained. Strictly speaking, perhaps, the appearance of *invidia* in Purgatory involves disagreement with Aristotle on a technical point, but I think it would be easier for a convinced Aristotelian to place *invidia* in Purgatory than in Hell, just because the repentance which must precede admission to Purgatory implies the disappearance of *electio*, and thus obliges us to look at the passions which originally seduced the sinner rather than at the *habitus* which repentance tends to dissolve. These considerations, I may add, apply equally to *all* the capital vices, and give no support to any attempt to divide them into two classes; nor, again, could a mere passion bring any one to Purgatory: but I think it possible that the cleansing of *voluntas* effected by penitence would make it easier for a good Aristotelian to exhibit *invidia* in Purgatory than in Hell. Perhaps, however, the argument is too subtle, and there is no need to go beyond the fact that a Hell constructed on the basis of Aristotle's vices would not contain *invidia*.

Unfortunately, the very same line of argument which rids us of *acedia* and *invidia* obliges us to require the appearance of a sin connected with the inordinate pursuit of *honores*. Whether the correct term be *superbia* or *inanis gloria* or *praesumptio* is a minor question, but it is certain that every method employed by St. Thomas for the specification of moral sins must produce a sin of that type; and, to my mind, the central difficulty of the *Inferno* is, not the absence of three

capital vices, but the single case of the vice to which magnanimous or ambitious men are liable. The *obiectum* of the 'irascible' mode of appetite is some kind of *bonum arduum*, and St. Thomas almost always selects *honores* as the typical example. Thus the division of *bona* into *bona corporis*, *bona exteriora*, and *bona animae* might be applied to the Inferno, with the result that the second and third circles would account for *bona corporis*, the fourth for *bona exteriora*, and the fifth for the incidental *mala* which provoke *ira*. But where are the *bona animae*? Or again, remembering that Dante's most direct allusion is to *incontinentia* and *malitia*, we might attempt to extract from the seventh book of the *Ethics* a complete explanation of the *Inferno*. Now Aristotle teaches (*Nic. Eth.* vii. 4) that the term *incontinentia* should properly be restricted to want of self-control in respect of the pleasures *circa tactum et gustum*, but he allows certain metaphorical or secondary applications, because, as St. Thomas says :—

sicut aliquis immoderate concupiscit voluptates corporales, ita pecuniam et alia praedicta. (*Eth.* vii. 4.)

And again :—

sed circa iram dicimus incontinentiam secundum similitudinem : et ideo addimus incontinentem irae, sicut incontinentem honoris et lucri. (Ibid.)

However much *similitudo* there may be, Aristotle undoubtedly describes vices relative to *ira*, to *honor*, and to *lucrum* ; and since in all these vices there was unregulated passion rather than *malitia*, neither St. Thomas nor Dante would see any real objections to classing them as sins of incontinence. If, then, we were to analyse the *Inferno* simply with the help of *incontinentia* and *malitia*, we should find the genuine *incontinentia* in circles two and three, *incontinentia lucri* in circle four, *incontinentia irae* in circle five, *malitia* in circles seven, eight, and nine. But, once more, where is *incontinentia honoris*? or what excuse can there be for its omission? *De cavenda gloria* was, in fact, one of the commonplace themes of antiquity, and if we fly from Aristotle to Cicero

or other authorities, it will make not the slightest difference. Either we must find this vice lurking in the *Inferno*, or we must suppose that Dante missed it out because he knew *himself* to be prone to Vainglory!

The concealment of *superbia vel inanis gloria* in the *Inferno* depends, I believe, on the same perplexity of moral doctrine which caused Dante to be silent respecting the sixth circle. We must, therefore, re-enter that circle and examine its occupants for the second time. Overshadowing all others we see Farinata; and of what moral failing, let any reader of Dante ask himself, is Farinata meant to be a picture? If Dante had given us no detailed information about the various circles, but had merely professed, in the broadest sense, to be following Aristotle, or, let us say, to be punishing all the most obvious moral offences, how should we then proceed to identify the sins? In some cases (as with Paolo and Francesca) the sinners themselves reveal the nature of their guilt: in others the records of contemporary history would assist us: in others we could draw an inference from the character of the punishment; but it appears to me that the one point on which no one could be doubtful is that Farinata stands for Pride. His is, perhaps, the one case in the *Inferno* where the character-drawing is sufficient in itself. No confession, no symbol (like the purse of the usurers) is necessary: even the behaviour of Filippo Argenti is obscure when compared with the self-revelation of Farinata. Let me transcribe a few lines from the tenth canto, beginning with Farinata's first appearance to Dante:—

> ed ei s' ergea col petto e colla fronte,
> come avesse lo inferno in gran dispitto. (*Inf.* x. 35.)

Virgil pushes Dante forward, and then:—

> Com' io al piè della sua tomba fui,
> guardommi un poco, e poi quasi sdegnoso
> mi dimandò: 'Chi fur li maggior tui?'
> Io, ch' era d' ubbidir desideroso,
> non gliel celai, ma tutto gliel' apersi:
> ond' ei levò le ciglia un poco in soso;

poi disse: 'Fieramente furo avversi
a me ed a' miei primi ed a mia parte,
sì che per due fiate gli dispersi.' (40–8.)

Then comes the wonderful episode of Cavalcanti, to the pathos of which Farinata remains absolutely indifferent:—

Ma quell' altro magnanimo, a cui posta
restato m' era, non mutò aspetto,
nè mosse collo, nè piegò sua costa. (73–5.)

Finally, when Dante inquires about Farinata's companions in torment, the answer is:—

Qui con più di mille giaccio:
qua dentro è lo secondo Federico,
e il Cardinale, e degli altri mi taccio. (118–20.)

Every point in this scene is nicely calculated to express the pride and scorn which Farinata bestowed upon mankind in his lifetime, and has now transferred to Hell itself. Whatever else Dante may have intended, it is obvious, at least, that by painting Farinata in these colours he debarred himself from setting apart any other district of Hell for the punishment of Pride or Vainglory. In one sense *superbia* may be expected anywhere in the circles of *malitia*, but I count it impossible, if Dante had any regard for art, that he would have depicted Farinata in this fashion if he had intended us to look elsewhere for the sin of presumptuous self-esteem.

As yet I have not attempted to fix upon any one name for Farinata's sin, but, on the supposition that Dante was following Aristotle, the presumptuous man would represent the *excessus* in relation to *magnanimitas*. Now Dante goes so far as to call Farinata *magnanimo*, which, considering the associations of the word, is a flattering title for a condemned sinner. The use of the word may be an accident, or, perhaps, an involuntary confession of Dante's sympathy with Pride—for if, as Johnson said to Boswell, it displays the grossest ignorance of human nature to suppose that a man is a hypocrite because he denounces vices to which he himself is prone, it argues an ignorance not less gross to suppose that Dante could altogether conceal his admiration for a failing

of which he confesses himself guilty (*Purg.* xiii. 133–8). Apart from the actual word, however, I propose to regard Farinata as one who failed to observe the mean in respect of *magnanimitas*. The outward resemblance between true and spurious magnanimity is necessarily close, and Farinata is a good illustration of St. Thomas's Commentary upon *Eth. Nic.* 1124. b. 2–6:—

volunt enim imitari magnanimum, cum tamen non sint ei similes. Imitantur autem eum in quibus possunt; non quidem in hoc quod operentur secundum virtutem, quod maxime facit magnanimus; sed in hoc quod contemnunt alios, non tamen eodem modo sicut magnanimus . . . (*Eth.* iv. 9.)

St. Thomas has no less than three vices, *praesumptio*, *ambitio*, and *inanis gloria*, which are *opposita magnanimitati per excessum*, and Dante would select from these such characteristics as he required. The χαυνότης of the *Ethics* is less wide than later conceptions of *inanis gloria*, but no one would dispute St. Thomas's judgement, *inordinatus appetitus gloriae directe magnanimitati opponitur* (*S.* 2. 2. cxxxii. 2), and no one will deny that the character of Farinata can easily be manufactured out of the materials provided by Aristotle and his mediaeval exponents.

It has still to be shown, (1) that there is a connexion between Pride and Heresy, (2) that Dante had a reason for not mentioning Pride in the sixth circle. And here, as I have hinted already, we simply come back to that same difficulty which prevented Dante from including the sixth circle in the moral scheme enunciated by Virgil. For (1) there must of necessity be *some* moral cause of intellectual error, (2) there are grave objections to making this cause either *incontinentia* or *malitia*; for this, as was argued in the preceding chapter, would take away the specific character of the sin residing in the *intellectus speculativus*. Yet St. Thomas acknowledges that the sin of the intellect must somehow be traced to the action of the will:—

contemptus voluntatis causat dissensum intellectus, in quo perficitur ratio infidelitatis; unde causa infidelitatis est in

voluntate, sed ipsa infidelitas est in intellectu. (*S.* 2. 2. x. 2. ad 2.)

How, then, can the causative action of the will best be expressed? What moral failing issues in Heresy, Infidelity, and other intellectual errors? The word *contemptus*, as used in the above passage, supplies the answer, and we find that St. Thomas habitually imputes the sin of the intellect to the blinding effect of Pride. When, for instance, he is challenged to prove a connexion between *infidelitas* and the capital vices, he gives the answer, which, on account of its great importance, I must quote for the second time:—

infidelitas, secundum quod est peccatum, oritur ex superbia; ex qua contingit quod homo intellectum suum non vult subicere regulis fidei et sano intellectui Patrum. Unde Gregorius dicit quod 'Ex inani gloria oriuntur novitatum praesumptiones'. Quamvis posset dici quod sicut virtutes theologicae non reducuntur ad virtutes cardinales, sed sunt priores eis; ita etiam vitia opposita virtutibus theologicis non reducuntur ad vitia capitalia. (*S.* 2. 2. x. 1. ad 3.)

In the *De Malo*, again, after distinguishing the two senses of *superbia*, St. Thomas goes on to differentiate Heresy from *nescientia*, *ignorantia*, and *error*:—

quia importat pertinaciam quae sola facit haereticum, quae quidem pertinacia ex superbia oritur. (*De Malo*, viii. 1. ad 7.)

He adds that Heresy arising from pure ignorance may be due to *acedia*. Once more: in the *Summa* it is objected that *superbia* cannot be in the *irascibilis* because it hinders the knowledge of truth, and truth has nothing to do with the lower appetite. In reply St. Thomas says:—

cognitio veritatis est duplex: una pure speculativa; et hanc superbia indirecte impedit, subtrahendo causam. Superbus enim neque Deo intellectum suum subicit ut ab eo veritatis cognitionem percipiat. . . . Alia autem est cognitio veritatis, scilicet affectiva; et talem cognitionem directe impedit superbia, quia superbi dum delectantur in propria excellentia excellentiam veritatis fastidiunt. (*S.* 2. 2. clxii. 3. ad 1.)

In all these passages there is a hint of some difficulty in separating *superbia* from *inanis gloria*, but one can hardly imagine that Dante would have felt himself technically pro-

hibited from ascribing Heresy to the Aristotelian vice most nearly resembling *inanis gloria*. The *inanis gloria* of which Gregory speaks may gradually give way to the pertinacious obstinacy of pure *superbia*; but the main fact is that intellectual sin is caused by vanity or arrogance of some kind, and this fits the case of Farinata exactly.

There is another reason for believing that Pride is punished in the sixth circle. Hitherto we have explained the position of that circle by reference only to the place of the *intellectus speculativus* in the economy of the soul; but, even apart from any connexion of Pride with Heresy, the position of Farinata, as representing the presumptuous man, is absolutely correct. For (1) tradition and argument combine to show that *inanis gloria* is the worst of all sins *circa passiones* (Ch. xiv, p. 249); (2) *superbia* itself always seems to waver between the higher and the lower appetite. Three or four times St. Thomas asks whether *superbia* belongs to the *irascibilis*, and answers (e.g. in *S.* 2. 2. clxii. 3) that the term *irascibilis* must be extended so as to signify an element in *voluntas*. To speak less technically, Pride stands on the border-line between sins of appetite and sins of malice; and the sixth circle also is intermediate between *incontinentia* and *malitia*. If, then, the sin which may be called *superbia* or *inanis gloria* or *praesumptio* or (loosely) *excessus magnanimitatis* is anywhere in the *Inferno*, the only natural place to look for it is in the region of the Heretics. Doubtless we may continue to argue that Dante ought to have reserved a special circle for it, but then he would once more have reopened the problem about the moral cause of Heresy. I maintain, then, that Dante does the only possible thing: he preserves a discreet silence about the technical state of affairs, but takes pains, in the character of Farinata, to show that Pride is the cause of Heresy. Farinata's pride seems very different from the kind of ambition that we should describe as *incontinentia honoris*, but it falls quite naturally within the *peccata magnanimitati opposita per excessum*.

The hypothesis that Dante did follow, so far as possible, the guidance of Aristotle may, however, be criticized on the

ground that many vices condemned in the *Ethics* can by no kind of artifice be discovered in the *Inferno*. This is perfectly true, but the force of such criticism is greatly diminished by our previous researches into the method of St. Thomas, and especially by the comparison of the Aristotelian with the capital vices (Ch. xvii). I will not repeat the steps of that argument, but I believe that sound reasons were there advanced for the reduction of the twenty possible Aristotelian vices (not counting Injustice) to a very much smaller number. Assuming, in fact, that Farinata does represent *praesumptio*, there are only two Aristotelian sins whose absence from the *Inferno* might be remarked, and these are *ignavia* and *pusillanimitas*. Now so long as *fortitudo* and *magnanimitas* remain perfectly distinct, the same distinctness must be postulated for the opposing vices, but on many occasions we have observed that the Aristotelian *fortitudo* (relative only to *mala corporalia*) tends to get lost in a more spiritual form of the virtue. Moreover, we have a piece of irrefutable evidence that Dante himself, in spite of his professed adherence to Aristotle, came practically to identify *fortezza* with *magnanimità* (Ch. xix, p. 330). Under these circumstances *ignavia* and *pusillanimitas* would be fused into a single vice, and though we cannot feel certain that the policy of the *Convito* would be followed in the *Inferno*, I think all reasonable demands will be satisfied if we can find in Dante's Hell one group of sinners who owed their fall to a craven spirit.

The most casual reader of the *Divine Comedy* is arrested by the tremendous scorn which Dante pours upon the *setta dei cattivi*. Hitherto I have ignored these unhappy beings, because their situation on this side of Acheron seems to indicate that they lie also outside the moral scheme of Hell. Nevertheless, I feel convinced that, whether by design or by the force of circumstances, they do exercise an influence upon the construction of the infernal circles. The idea of refusing the cowards admission to Hell because in their lifetime they would not choose between God and His enemies is a stroke of invention so individual and personal that it would be

almost ludicrous to seek its origin in any system of philosophy. Yet it does not follow that the *cattivi* were without effect upon the rest of the Inferno, and my first contention is that, when once Dante had placed the cowards where he does and fastened such infamy upon them, it was forthwith out of the question that he should have another set of cowardly or pusillanimous sinners within the pale of Hell. Any further representation of the same vice could be only a watery reflection, and in this sense, at any rate, I hold that the *cattivi* of Dante embrace both the *ignavi* and the *pusillanimes* of Aristotle.

But then comes a more delicate problem. Was it that Dante first determined to place the cowards outside the Inferno proper, and thus debarred himself from representing *ignavia* or *pusillanimitas* elsewhere? Or was it rather that he was sensible of a difficulty concerning those vices, and so was inspired with the happy thought of leaving them outside Hell? No one can decide positively between these alternatives, but there are one or two facts which ought to be considered.

(1) The conjunction of the *avari* and *prodighi* in the same circle seems to imply that the doctrine of the Mean is respected in the *Inferno*, but we have seen that neither in Hell nor in Purgatory is there any clear example but this particular pair of vices. To a great extent, however, this fact is explicable, for in several cases only one of the extremes was likely to be counted mortal sin (Ch. xvii, p. 293). The *defectus* relative to *temperantia* and *ira* would easily disappear, and this would account for there being only one class of sinners in the second, third, and fifth circles. But it would be hazardous to get rid of *pusillanimitas* on the same principle, and if I am to argue that Farinata stands for *excessus magnanimitatis*, I shall not refuse to face the objection that the *defectus* ought also to be punished.

(2) But, on my own interpretation of the sixth circle, it would be almost impossible for Dante to punish the *defectus* in company with the *excessus*. For the complication of *praesumptio* with Heresy imparted to the circle such a

character that *pusillanimitas* would have been wholly out of place there. If the right of Pride to appear as the cause of Heresy was so doubtful that neither St. Thomas nor Dante could pronounce openly upon it, still less could *pusillanimitas* be introduced at a point where it must seem to be separated from the sins of incontinence.

(3) At this moment, we may conjecture, the notion of shutting the *cattivi* out of Hell itself flashed upon Dante, but I venture to suggest that he may have been encouraged by the thought that the *cattivi* would then be in exactly the position required for the *ignavi* by the order of the virtues in Aristotle's *Ethics*. The order of those virtues and the theory that they progress from the least to the most important have been discussed elsewhere (Ch. xvii, p. 294). The situation of *fortitudo* appeared to be the only genuine difficulty, and this was settled, in effect, by refining away the physical character of the virtue; but it still may have occurred to Dante that by placing the *cattivi* where we find them he was making a show of literal Aristotelianism. In the *Ethics*, *fortitudo* immediately precedes *temperantia*, and in the *Inferno* the *cattivi* come immediately before the *lussuriosi*. The *cattivi*, however, are *pusillanimes* rather than *ignavi*. They are not men who trembled at the approach of *mala corporalia*, but men who would not take a side in moral conflicts, or who feared to accept a great position, lest the burden should prove too heavy for their strength. Inasmuch, then, as this is the only sort of cowardice noticed by Dante, we may say that he has treated *ignavia* proper much as he treated *fortitudo* in the *Convito*. But since he could not place the moral cowards with *praesumptuosi* of the sixth circle, he found for them a place suggestive of Aristotle's *ignavi*. I wish it to be clearly understood, however, that for my own interpretation of the *Inferno* it is not in the least essential that a link should be discovered between Aristotle's *ignavi* and Dante's *cattivi*. The coincidence of position may be the purest accident, and the only propositions to which I attach any weight are these:—

(1) That the actual treatment of the *cattivi* made it artis-

tically impossible for *ignavi* or *pusillanimes* to appear elsewhere.

(2) That the non-appearance of Aristotle's *ignavi* is accounted for by the tradition in favour of making *fortitudo* all but equivalent to *magnanimitas*.

(3) That the relation of *praesumptio* to Heresy excluded the *pusillanimes* from the sixth circle.

Before leaving the *cattivi* I may add that their existence would make it all the easier for Dante to ignore *defectus sensibilitatis* and *defectus irae*, and also, perhaps, would help to smooth over the awkwardness of having no Aristotelian substitute for *acedia*. For the *cattivi* evidently include all who in any way decline to face the issue, all who pay their taxes and keep the Commandments, and suppose themselves ripe for the kingdom of Heaven. All of these illustrate the pregnant saying of Aristotle—οὐχ οἱ κάλλιστοι καὶ ἰσχυρότατοι στεφανοῦνται, ἀλλ' οἱ ἀγωνιζόμενοι· τούτων γάρ τινες νικῶσιν (*Eth. Nic.* i. 1099. a. 4).

In connexion with Pride or Presumption there is a passage which ought to be noticed. The lines descriptive of Filippo Argenti and his sin are these :—

> Quei fu al mondo persona orgogliosa ;
> bontà non è che sua memoria fregi :
> così s' è l' ombra sua qui furiosa.
> Quanti si tengon or lassù gran regi,
> che qui staranno come porci in brago,
> di sè lasciando orribili dispregi ! (*Inf.* viii. 46.)

The description of Argenti, taken as a whole, forbids us to doubt that his sin is *ira*, yet these lines, and especially the word *orgogliosa*, are suggestive of some kind of Pride. It would, however, be an error to suppose that Dante has really passed beyond *ira* to another sin, for our speculations upon the order of the capital vices have shown that Pride is the chief cause of anger. St. Thomas even asks *utrum sola parvipensio vel despectio sit motivum irae* (*S.* 1. 2. xlvii. 2), and answers that anything that seems to derogate from our *excellentia* is provocative of anger :—

et ideo illi qui sunt in aliqua excellentia maxime irascuntur si parvipendantur. (*S.* 1. 2. xlvii. 3.)

Thus kings and all *persone orgogliose* will be very liable to the sin of anger, and no further explanation is needed of the language applied to Argenti and those who are destined to join him. Possibly Dante emphasized this aspect of the sin because he knew that he could not openly attribute pride to Farinata, but even this need not be assumed.

Another passage, equally notable, relates also to the sin of anger, but has been supposed to contain a reference to *acedia*. Virgil tells Dante that there are sinners submerged in the marsh:—

> Fitti nel limo dicon: 'Tristi fummo
> nell' aer dolce che dal sol s' allegra,
> portando dentro accidioso fummo.' (*Inf.* vii. 121.)

I need hardly say that I cannot agree with the opinion that Dante here signifies the presence of *acedia*, but the appearance of the word *accidioso* is certainly remarkable. As to the technical status of the *tristi*, I have no doubt that Dr. Moore and others are right in taking them to represent the sullen variety of anger mentioned by Aristotle, and I should like to advert to some evidence which has not been fully appreciated. First of all, there is the fact that, in the writings of St. Thomas, *tristitia* and *ira* are inseparable. The sense of *iniuria illata* produces *tristitia*, and *ira* is the direct consequence. But then comes in the difference between the three species of anger which (following Aristotle, Gregory of Nyssa, and John of Damascus) St. Thomas recognizes under the titles of *acuti*, *amari*, and *difficiles* (or *graves*). In practice, however, the *difficiles* are not very clearly distinguished, and we shall need to dwell only on the distinction between those who are swift to display their wrath and those who nurse and cherish it within. Of the *prompti ad iram* St. Thomas writes:—

> et hoc est optimum quod in eis accidit quia non retinent eam interius in corde, sed statim prorumpit exterius . . . et sic ira exterius exhalante requiescunt. Sicut etiam calor inclusus magis conservatur, evaporans autem citius evanescit. (*Eth.* iv. 13.)

Turning next to the *amari*, he says that they retain anger in their heart until revenge gives pleasure *loco tristitiae praecedentis*:—

sed ad hoc quod eorum ira digeratur est necessarium longum tempus quo paulatim tepescat et extinguatur accensio irae . . . Ad hanc autem speciem superabundantiae maxime videntur dispositi esse melancholici, in quibus impressiones susceptae diu propter humoris grossitiem perseverant. (Ibid.)

And in the *Summa* we read:—

amari habent iram permanentem, propter permanentiam tristitiae quam inter viscera tenent clausam. (*S.* 2. 2. clviii. 5. ad 2.)

The word *fumus* does not occur, but, short of this, St. Thomas could not have chosen language better fitted to illustrate the nature of Dante's *tristi*. The metaphors of *exhalatio*, *evaporatio*, *calor inclusus*, *humoris grossities*, and the notion of keeping the *tristitia* shut up *inter viscera*, all suggest the temperament indicated in the line:—

portando dentro accidioso fummo.

Of the effect of sullen anger St. Thomas says:—

causa irae nimis manet in memoria hominis: unde ex hoc homo diutinam tristitiam concipit: et ideo sunt sibi ipsis graves et amari. (*S.* 2. 2. clviii. 5.)

And this is like Dante's—

or ci attristiam nella belletta negra.

Nevertheless, the use of the word *accidioso* is curious, and Dante may have meant a little more by this passage than a simple allusion to Aristotle. The two capital vices (*invidia* and *acedia*) not recognized by Aristotle are both reprehensible *species tristitiae*, and, if Dante had resolved not to model the Inferno upon the capital vices but upon Aristotle, he may for that very reason have laid some stress upon the punishment of culpable *tristitia*. Aristotle had no *acedia*, and did not number *invidia* with the vices, but did he condemn any form of *tristitia*? If Dante put this question to himself—and it would be a question thoroughly in accordance with the method of St. Thomas—he would remember that Aristotle

had not overlooked the sinfulness of nursing *tristitia* in the heart. *Acedia* and the sullen *ira* differ entirely in relation to their *obiecta*, but there is some degree of resemblance between them, especially in their effect upon persons afflicted with them. St. Thomas often remarks the paralysing effect of *acedia* upon bodily motions, and in one place he says :—

ideo autem specialiter acedia dicitur vocem amputare, quia vox inter omnes exteriores motus magis exprimit interiorem conceptum et affectum. (*S.* 1. 2. xxxv. 8.)

The *amputatio vocis* is parallel to Dante's :—

Quest' inno sì gorgoglian nella strozza,
chè dir nol posson con parola integra. (*Inf.* vii. 125.)

But turn to the chapter on the effects of *ira*, and you find the question, *utrum ira maxime causet taciturnitatem*, with the answer :—

perturbatio irae usque ad exteriora membra perducitur, et maxime usque ad illa membra in quibus expressius relucet vestigium cordis, sicut in oculis et in facie et in lingua. (*S.* 1. 2. xlviii. 4.)

Dante may thus have adopted the word *accidioso*, not to intimate the literal presence of *acedia*, but because sullen anger was a culpable form of *tristitia*, agreeing with *acedia* in some of its effects. All this, however, is doubtful, and I regard nothing as certain but that Dante's *tristi* are the angry folk known to St. Thomas as *amari*. That *defectus irae* has nothing to do with the matter may be seen by a reference to any relevant passage in St. Thomas (e. g. *S.* 2. 2. clviii. 8).

The main points which I have tried to establish in this chapter are these :—

(1) that the capital vices, as such, have nothing to do with the scheme of the *Inferno* ;

(2) that four of them, nevertheless, are visibly punished there, because those four are condemned by every moral system ;

(3) that *acedia* and *invidia* are absent because they are not Aristotelian vices ;

(4) that *superbia* (or whatever we call it) is in the sixth

circle, but, on account of the complication with Heresy, is unmentioned;

(5) that the *cattivi* prevent the subsequent recognition of *pusillanimitas* or *ignavia*.

In connexion with the third of these propositions I would fain prevent misunderstanding. Relying upon Dante's avowed preference for Aristotle and upon the allusions in the eleventh canto, I have tried to interpret the circles of Incontinence in the light of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Yet here, as always, I would urge that it is a mere *ignoratio elenchi* to wrangle over the rival claims of Aristotle and Cicero, for Dante had been educated in a school which had blended together both these philosophers, and many others with them. If, in fact, Dante had actually chosen Cicero as his model, all the more important results would still have been just what they are. In the *De Officiis* the analysis of virtue depends wholly upon the notion of four cardinal virtues; and all the vices against which Cicero warns his pupil are opposed to one or other of the four. Among other facts we observe, (1) that there is no such thing as *acedia*, (2) that *invidia* is barely mentioned and has no formal recognition as a vice, (3) that Cicero freely condemns *gloriae cupiditas* (i. 20), *superbia*, *fastidium*, and *arrogantia* (i. 26), and gives to this kind of vice as prominent a place as to Avarice, Anger, or Lust. Relatively to the capital vices, therefore, Cicero and Aristotle stand upon an equality. Neither of them includes *acedia* or *invidia*, but both require the punishment of *superbia vel inanis gloria*. Even the *cattivi* might be traced to a passage in which Cicero shows the difference between contempt and moral censure:—

> non enim omnes eos contemnunt de quibus male existimant. Nam quos improbos, maledicos, fraudulentos putant et ad faciendam iniuriam instructos, eos haud contemnunt quidem, sed de eis male existimant. Quamobrem, ut ante dixi, contemnuntur ii qui 'nec sibi nec alteri', ut dicitur, in quibus nullus labor, nulla industria, nulla cura est. (*De Off.* ii. 10.)

A brilliant modification of *nec sibi nec alteri* would give Dante's

che non furon ribelli
nè fur fedeli a Dio, ma per sè foro.
(*Inf.* iii. 38.)

In many other ways, too, it would be possible to trace the possible influence of the *De Officiis*, but since (the mediaeval) Aristotle will explain at least as much of the *Inferno* as any other philosopher, and since whenever Dante does openly refer to any authority it is always to Aristotle, I maintain that the principles of sound criticism favour the opinion that Aristotle was uppermost in his mind.

CHAPTER XXIV

FORZA AND *BESTIALITADE*

THE *Inferno* has now been traversed from end to end, but a revision of the journey will instantly remind us that the two lower *gironi* of the seventh circle were passed over almost without criticism. As to the first *girone*, there was no doubt that the sins contained in it belonged to the class of *iniuriae*, but the problem of *bestialitas* may arise even there. The whole circle, in fact, must be re-examined, with the object of showing (1) that Dante does (or does not) intend to combine 'bestial' sins with sins of *forza*, (2) that the sins in the second and third *gironi* are to be regarded as *iniuriae*.

I

If Dante meant nothing by the mention of *bestialitade*, he must, to say the least of it, have taken great pleasure in deceiving his readers. The plea that he had to drag in this term because it occurs in connexion with the distinction between *incontinentia* and *malitia* is simply grotesque. In the first place, it is not true that *bestialitas* is mentioned at all in the argument by which Aristotle proves that Incontinence is less culpable than Malice. The three terms are mentioned together at the beginning of the seventh book, but the sophistical ἀπορία discussed by Aristotle (chiefly in *Nic. Eth.* vii. 8) concerns only *incontinentia* and *malitia*, and there is no complication whatever with *bestialitas*. And secondly, why bring in Aristotle at all? The difference between deliberate sins and sins of impulse was recognized by every moralist known to Dante, and unless the whole scheme of the *Inferno* was meant to be Aristotelian, there could be no reason for appealing to the authority of Aristotle for so common a doctrine. Cicero, for instance, says:—

sed in omni iniustitia permultum interest utrum perturbatione aliqua animae, quae plerumque brevis est et ad tempus, an consulto et cogitata fiat iniuria. Leviora enim sunt ea quae repentino aliquo motu accidunt quam ea quae meditata et praeparata inferuntur. (*De Off.* i. 8.)

I do not say that this is exactly the terminology Dante would have adopted, but those who hold that the distinction of *vis* and *fraus* is taken from Cicero would surely allow that Cicero preaches here the lesser guilt of Incontinence? If, on the other hand, Dante owed the distinction of Force and Fraud to Aristotle, it would be natural enough to refer to Aristotle again in line 80, though even then there was no need to mention *bestialitade*, unless it was to find a place in the Inferno.

One cannot insist, however, that Dante was incapable of an artistic blunder, and my next effort must be to dissipate certain errors and prejudices about *bestialitas* which seem to have blinded the eyes of many commentators to the positive facts. First and foremost stands the opinion (advocated, e.g., by Dr. Moore in *Dante Studies*, Second Series, p. 161) that *bestialitas* ought to be placed lower in the Inferno than *malitia*. But I have no hesitation in asserting that, from the standpoint of Dante or St. Thomas, it was quite impossible to account *bestialitas* more heinous than sins compassed by human malice. This contention I do not rest primarily upon Aristotle's teaching (which, perhaps, is ambiguous), nor do I even feel certain that St. Thomas believed Aristotle to be sound on the point, but I do contend that neither St. Thomas nor Dante could have thought bestial sins the worst of all; for this would have meant that they had renounced Christianity in favour of a quasi-Manichaean philosophy of evil. In common parlance, we attribute moral evil to the lower element in human nature, and when we stigmatize an act as 'bestial' or 'brutal', we suppose ourselves to have set it on the lowest moral plane. But St. Thomas, like all who understand Christian doctrine, takes precisely the opposite view, and the more you insist on the 'bestial' character of a sin, the more clearly you prove to him that the sin is *less*

grave than those proceeding from the pure activity of reason and will. Whatever, in Dante's phrase, is the *proprio male* of man must be worse than acts displaying chiefly those powers which he shares with other animals; and when, through excess of passion or morbid habit, man is reduced to the very semblance of a beast, the question is, not whether he surpasses in iniquity the cold and rational sinner, but whether his acts remain sufficiently human to incur even the mildest form of moral censure. Something of this sort was evidently felt by Aristotle himself, for it will be admitted, I think, that he discovers some hesitation in attempting any moral comparison between θηριότης and κακία. Those who assume θηριότης to be the worse condition are influenced mainly by the fact that Aristotle makes it the opposite extreme to θεία ἀρετή, which is something higher than human virtue. But against this has to be set the statement :—

ὥσπερ οὐδὲ θηρίου ἐστὶ κακία οὐδ' ἀρετή, οὕτως οὐδὲ θεοῦ, ἀλλ' ἡ μὲν τιμιώτερον ἀρετῆς, ἡ δ' ἕτερόν τι γένος κακίας. (*Eth. Nic.* vii. 1145. a. 25.)

In other words, the possibility of a comparison is doubtful, and, again, Aristotle says that certain morbid habits are ἔξω τῶν ὅρων τῆς κακίας, καθάπερ καὶ ἡ θηριότης. I am not forgetting my own principle, that the original Aristotle is barely relevant, but I may be excused for pointing out that when, like St. Thomas, you have translated θεία ἀρετή into *dona Spiritus* (*S.* 2. 2. clix. 2. ad 1) you make it still more difficult to draw either divine virtue or bestial vice within the sphere of moral philosophy. Still, we are bound to assume that, if *bestialitas* could be punished in the Inferno, Dante must treat it as a moral condition, and my point, at present, is only that any Christian writer of Dante's age would certainly take advantage of the doubtful statements in Aristotle in order to show that bestial sins, if compared at all with the purely human, must incur the lesser blame in the sight of God. So far, in fact, as anticipation on general grounds of probability is of any value, we can only say that Dante could not have put *bestialitas* below human *malitia* without declaring himself the author of a moral revolution.

There is another prejudice, of much less importance, floating about on the pages of commentaries; and this is that Dante would never have applied so gross a term as 'bestial' to some of the sinners dwelling in the seventh circle. This kind of argument may not be very forcible, but I notice it because it affords a good example of the way in which men will ignore both the facts and the point. *Bestialis* is assuredly not a word to be used in the drawing-room, but in Hell it is complimentary rather than the reverse. The squeamish critic is again forgetting that *maior infamia* goes habitually with *minor culpa*, and that by calling a man a clever impostor Dante would be uttering a far graver condemnation than by calling him a degraded brute. And look, too, at the solid facts before us. The only people in the seventh circle whom Dante treats with marked respect are those guilty of the *vitium sodomiticum*; Brunetto Latini in the fifteenth canto, Jacopo Rusticucci and his companions in the sixteenth. Now this sin is, beyond question, a case of *bestialitas*, and yet Dante says:—

> Io non osava scender della strada
> per andar par di lui, ma il capo chino
> tenea, come uom che reverente vada.
> (*Inf.* xv. 43.)

And lest we should think that the reverence goes no further than a physical attitude, Virgil himself, in the next canto, bids Dante be respectful to the distinguished Florentines:—

> 'Ora aspetta,'
> disse, 'a costor si vuole esser cortese:
> E se non fosse il foco che saetta
> la natura del loco, io dicerei
> che meglio stesse a te che a lor la fretta.'
> (*Inf.* xvi. 14.)

And Dante says, when he learns their names:—

> S' io fussi stato dal foco coperto,
> gittato mi sarei tra lor disotto,
> e credo che il Dottor l' avria sofferto. (Ibid. 46–8.)

Here, then, are people whom Dante honours with a respect unparalleled in the *Inferno*, and yet these people are, as

a matter of plain and undeniable fact, guilty of gross and bestial sin. With what pretence of reason, therefore, can it be urged that Dante would not fasten such a nasty word as *bestialitas* upon some of the inhabitants of the seventh circle? But let us leave these preliminary excursions and pass to the more genuine difficulties.

When reading the *Nicomachean Ethics*, we most of us, I imagine, look upon the topic of θηριότης as isolated and exceptional, but it is doubtful whether St. Thomas took this view, and his teaching will not be justly appreciated unless we attend to some passages in which Aristotle uses the term θηριώδης in a less technical sense than it bears in his seventh book. For Aristotle was accustomed to stigmatize as 'bestial' the undue indulgence in any of the pleasures common to man and beast. One of the modes of life, for instance, which men regard as ideal is the *vita voluptuosa*, and the Latin translation of *Eth. Nic.* i. 1095. b. 19–20 is:—

multi quidem igitur omnino bestiales videntur esse, secundum vitam eligentes.

St. Thomas mentions the kind of pleasures that belong to this life, and says:—

huiusmodi autem delectationes sunt communes hominibus et bestiis: unde multitudo hominum ponentium finem in huiusmodi voluptatibus videntur omnino bestiales... (*Eth.* i. 5.)

In the third book, again, we learn something of the pleasures controlled by *temperantia*:—

circa tales utique temperantia et intemperantia est quibus reliqua animalia communicant. Unde serviles et bestiales videntur. (*Eth. Nic.* iii. 1118. a. 23.)

And again:—

communissimus autem sensuum tactus, secundum quem intemperantia. Et videtur utique iuste exprobrabilis esse, quoniam non secundum quod homines sumus existit sed secundum quod animalia. Talibus utique gaudere et maxime diligere bestiale. (1118. b. 1.)

Upon this St. Thomas remarks:—

et inde est quod vitia intemperantiae maximam turpitudinem habent, quia per ea homo bestiis assimilatur. Et inde

est quod ex huiusmodi vitiis redditur homo maxime infamis et vituperabilis. (*Eth.* iii. 20.)

Lastly we have the *gastrimargi*, of whom Aristotle says:—

tales autem fiunt qui multum bestiales. (1118. b. 20.)

The translation suggests θηριώδεις, though, in point of fact, the Greek word is ἀνδραποδώδεις.

The point of these citations is twofold. Firstly, we see the term *bestialis* applied freely to men guilty of *luxuria* (and *gula*), and, secondly, we remind ourselves that these vices are the least damnable in the scale of St. Thomas. The very emphasis on such words as *infamis*, *vituperabilis*, *exprobrabilis* recalls Gregory's *maior infamia*, *minor culpa*, and in approaching the seventh book of the *Ethics* it is important to realize that *bestialis* was a common term of reproach for men guilty of sensual sins which, however degrading, are infinitely less grave than (for example) any sin against Justice. Still, there is something exceptional in the treatment of *bestialitas* in the seventh book, and we must inquire whether St. Thomas could indeed perform the improbable feat of inferring from Aristotle that certain special sins of the bestial sort were morally worse than human malice.

The Commentary on the *Ethics* has to be supplemented by the *Summa*, but I shall prefer not to mix up the two works together, and will begin with the Commentary. The term θηριότης is applied to several varieties of physical or psychical condition, and, in places, Aristotle seems to distinguish between a more and a less literal sense. And so when he says ἔλαττον δὲ θηριότης κακίας (1150. a. 1), some commentators maintain that he is speaking only of literal θηριότης, and that the bestial sins are, nevertheless, worse than the malicious. I note this point at the outset, but we cannot confine ourselves to a single passage, and must take the trouble of working through all that St. Thomas has left us. Inspecting the three terms, *incontinentia*, *malitia*, *bestialitas*, St. Thomas observes that all moral evil implies *appetitus perversitas*, and that when the *perversitas* extends also to the practical reason, a man will do evil *ex electione*, and his inward state will then be

malitia. Now perversity of appetite is due to a corruption of the *commensuratio affectionum*:—

uno igitur modo potest contingere in tali consonantia ita quod non extra limites humanae vitae: et tunc dicetur simpliciter incontinentia vel malitia humana . . . Alio modo potest corrumpi contemperantia humanarum affectionum ita quod progrediatur ultra limites humanae vitae in similitudinem affectionum alicuius bestiae . . . et hoc est quod vocatur bestialitas. (*Eth.* vii. 1.)

So far, there is no comparison in respect of gravity, but a few lines later, when enlarging upon the contrast between *virtus divina* and *bestialitas*, St. Thomas writes:—

sicut ergo affectiones sensitivae partis aliquando in homine corrumpuntur usque ad similitudinem bestiarum, et haec vocatur bestialitas supra humanam malitiam et incontinentiam; ita etiam rationalis pars quandoque in homine perficitur et formatur ultra communem modum humanae perfectionis, quasi ad similitudinem substantiarum separatarum. (Ibid.)

Some will infer that by *supra humanam malitiam* St. Thomas signifies a greater iniquity, but the passage is double-edged, for it indicates that *bestialitas* is only an extreme corruption of the *pars sensitiva*; in which case it would be quite impossible that bestial sins should be worse than those seated *in ratione.* We shall do well, however, to draw no conclusions at present.

There follows next Aristotle's discrimination of the means which produce *bestialitas*, and the following words are important:—

et propter malitiam autem hominum superexcedentes sic superinfamamus. (*Eth. Nic.* vii. 1145. a. 32.)

The advocates of one view will naturally interpret *superexcedentes* as a declaration that bestial sins are morally worse than malicious. But let us look at the three modes of becoming bestial, taken by St. Thomas from Aristotle:—

(1) sicut apud barbaros . . . propter malam communem consuetudinem aliqui incidunt in malitiam bestialem;
(2) propter aegritudines et orbitates . . . ex quibus in amentiam incidunt, et quasi bestiales fiunt;
(3) propter magnum augmentum malitiae, ex qua contingit

quod quosdam superexcellenter diffamamus dicentes eos bestiales. (*Eth.* vii. 1).

There is something to be said of each class. Thus (1) in connexion with the first we get explicitly the term *malitia bestialis*, (2) the people frenzied by grief are said to be *quasi*-bestial, (3) *magnum augmentum malitiae* is an echo of Aristotle's *superexcedentes*, but against the view that greater moral wickedness is thus implied we have to set the word *diffamamus*, which suggests that *bestiales* is only a term of *infamia* not of *culpa*.

But let us pass on to the fifth chapter, where, if anywhere, the comparative demerits of human and bestial *malitia* are settled. Aristotle's classification of the varieties of θηριότης is possibly not quite the same here as in the first chapter, but it will suffice to follow St. Thomas. *Temperantia* and *incontinentia* have to do with a certain class of *delectabilia*, and *bestialitas* comes into existence when men have an appetite for *delectabilia non naturaliter*. The question is, how can appetite for unnatural pleasures arise? St. Thomas deduces from Aristotle three cases:—

(1) *propter perniciosam naturam hominum qui sunt quasi bestiales*. Cannibalism is given as an example, and Aristotle's first mention of Phalaris (*Eth. Nic.* vii. 1148. b. 24) is explained by the fact that Phalaris was *crudelissimus tyrannus qui in ipsis cruciatibus hominum delectabatur* (*Eth.* vii. 5);

(2) *propter aliquas aegritudines, puta propter maniam vel propter furiam, vel aliquid huiusmodi*—e.g. the case of the man who sacrificed and ate his mother;

(3) *propter interiorem aegritudinem vel corruptionem provenientem ex consuetudine*—e.g. the habit of biting the nails and the *vitium sodomiticum*.

Observe that in none of these cases is man *literally* the same as a beast. Those in the first class come nearest to it, but even here the qualifying word *quasi* is used.

Next St. Thomas reduces the three classes to two:—

omnia autem praedicta, quae sunt contra naturam delectabilia, possunt reduci ad duo. Quibusdam enim accidit ex natura corporalis complexionis quam acceperunt a principio:

quibusdam vero accidunt ex consuetudine, puta quod consueverunt ad huiusmodi a pueritia: et simile est de his qui in hoc incidunt ex aegritudine corporali. Nam prava consuetudo est quasi quaedam aegritudo animalis. (*Eth.* vii. 5.)

In a word, *bestialitas* comes either (1) *ex natura*, or (2) *ex consuetudine*, and *consuetudo* includes (*a*) bodily disease, madness, &c., (*b*) disease of the soul brought about by habit.

After this St. Thomas proceeds to discuss the moral status of *homines bestiales*. Beasts themselves can be neither continent nor incontinent, for they have no *universalis opinio* (cf. *Eth. Nic.* vii. 1147. b. 4):—

huiusmodi autem homines qui propter perniciosam naturam sunt bestiis similes, habent quidem aliquid universalis apprehensionis, sed valde modicum, propter hoc quod ratio est in eis oppressa ex malitia complexionis . . . et ideo tales non dicuntur incontinentes simpliciter neque continentes, sed solum secundum quid, inquantum remanet in eis aliquid de iudicio rationis . . . et eadem ratio etiam videtur de his qui aegrotative habent, id est qui habent corruptam dispositionem propter malam consuetudinem, quae etiam opprimit iudicium rationis ad modum perversae naturae. (*Eth.* vii. 5.)

Proceeding, St. Thomas says:—

huiusmodi excessus malitiae potest esse circa vitia omnibus virtutibus opposita, sicut circa insipientiam quae opponitur prudentiae, circa timiditatem . . . et circa intemperantiam . . . et circa crudelitatem . . . (Ibid.)

In view of this passage, we should, as it seems, have done wrong in inferring that *bestialitas* is confined to the *pars sensitiva*, and though St. Thomas does not name a case relative to Justice, we might easily imagine one, such as kleptomania. Once more, too, we are confronted with *excessus malitiae*, but it is becoming more and more obvious that such phrases are only an echo of Aristotle's *extra terminos malitiae* (*Eth. Nic.* vii. 1148. b. 34). *Bestialitas* means an exaggerated manifestation of folly, lust, or cruelty, but that *malitia bestialis* is more culpable than *malitia humana* is an inference not drawn by St. Thomas. For the present he only argues that neither *malitia* nor *incontinentia* proper can be attributed to bestial men:—

sicut malitia quae est secundum modum humanum simpliciter dicitur malitia, quae autem est non naturalis homini dicitur cum additione malitia bestialis vel aegritudinalis, et non malitia simpliciter; eodem modo et incontinentia non naturalis dicitur cum additione, puta bestialis vel aegritudinalis. (Ibid.)

With the terms *bestialis malitia* and *bestialis incontinentia* firmly in our minds, we must turn, lastly, to the crucial passage at the end of St. Thomas's sixth *lectio*. Aristotle says (1150. a. 1), *minus autem bestialitas malitia, terribilius autem*, and St. Thomas begins:—

comparat bestialem malitiam vel incontinentiam humanae: et dicit quod bestialitas minus habet de ratione malitiae si consideretur conditio bestiae vel hominis bestialis. Sed bestialitas est terribilior quia facit maiora mala. (*Eth.* vii. 6.)

Every one must admit that, for the purpose of the proposed comparison, St. Thomas makes no distinction whatever between *bestia* and *homo bestialis*. He goes on, however, to speak of literal *bestiae*, and points out that, whereas beasts have no intellect at all, the *malus homo* retains his intellect, but in a corrupted state. Then he concludes with these words:—

sic ergo sicut bestia minus habet de culpa quam homo malus, sed est terribilior, ita etiam bestialis malitia, seu etiam incontinentia, terribilior quidem est sed minoris culpae et innocentior quam incontinentia seu malitia humana. Unde si aliqui amentes vel naturaliter bestiales peccent, minus puniuntur. (Ibid.)

Will any one, then, venture to argue that *bestialitas* is regarded by St. Thomas as a worse moral condition than *malitia humana*? A desperate man might pretend that the *amentes* and *naturaliter bestiales* do not include the victims of *prava consuetudo*, but the passages already quoted from St. Thomas are fatal to such a view. Everywhere we find *amentia* classed with *aegritudo corporalis*, and along with these *aegritudo animalis*. The truth is that the literal condition of *bestiae* has nothing at all to do with the question, except as an illustration. St. Thomas discusses only men who are *similes bestiis*, and he states categorically that *malitia bestialis* is less culpable than *malitia humana*. Phrases like

excessus malitiae are applied to the former, but only because bestial acts are beyond the bounds of humanity and because they produce *maiora mala*.

As we run over the acts and habits covered by the term *bestialitas*, we feel that many of them are beyond the range of moral censure. If, through hereditary or acquired madness, a man should eat human flesh, sacrifice his parents, or munch coals and earth, we should send for a doctor or a keeper, but should save our moral indignation for another occasion. Convention, however, and the facts of life forbade St. Thomas to relegate the whole of *bestialis malitia* to Pathology, and at least one case, that of the *vitium sodomiticum* or *vitium contra naturam*, could not be withdrawn from moral condemnation. Besides this, we may mention the delight in cruelty for its own sake, and perhaps, too, the case of the *gastrimargi* (who disappear, however, after the first chapter of *Nic. Eth.* vii). Practically, St. Thomas ignores all kinds of *bestialis malitia* except the *vitium contra naturam* and the mad cruelty which he calls *feritas*. I will therefore leave now the Commentary on the *Ethics* and examine the treatment of these sins in the *Summa*.

While discoursing upon the passions St. Thomas frames the question, *utrum aliqua delectatio sit non naturalis*. He replies that 'nature' in man may mean either *ratio*, the element peculiar to humanity, or the faculties common to man and beast. In either sense there can be a *delectatio non naturalis*, due to some *corruptio* :—

> quae quidem corruptio potest esse vel ex parte corporis, sicut ex aegritudine . . . sive propter malam complexionem, sicut aliqui delectantur in comestione terrae vel carbonum vel aliquorum huiusmodi; vel etiam ex parte animae, sicut propter consuetudinem aliqui delectantur in comedendo homines vel in coitu bestiarum aut masculorum aut aliorum huiusmodi, quae non sunt secundum naturam humanam. (*S.* 1. 2. xxxi. 7.)

It is to be observed that *all* vice is *contra naturam*, *inquantum est contra ordinem rationis* (*S.* 1. 2. lxxi. 2), but in this passage (which at once reminds us of Aristotle) St. Thomas is evidently thinking of vices *contra naturam* in the more

special sense, or, in other words, of *bestialitas*. Later on, when the occasion arrives for classifying such sins and appreciating their gravity, we learn that they are all to count as sins against *temperantia*; and this means that in the *Summa* St. Thomas does not recognize the isolation of *bestialitas* but reduces, as one might say, all uses of the term *bestialis* (whether in the third or the seventh book of the *Ethics*) to a single sense. In answer to the question, *utrum temperantia sit virtus*, he writes:—

homo naturaliter appetit delectationem sibi convenientem [i. e. secundum rationem] . . . unde patet quod temperantia non contrariatur inclinationi naturae humanae, sed convenit cum ea. Contrariatur tamen inclinationi naturae bestialis non subiectae rationi. (*S.* 2. 2. cxli. 1. ad 1.)

And again:—

ea a quibus refrenat temperantia sunt infima in homine, convenientia ei secundum naturam bestialem. (S. 2. 2. cxli. 2. ad 3.)

Soon afterwards comes the question, *utrum peccatum intemperantiae sit maxime exprobrabile*, and the third 'objection' asserts that the pleasures called by Aristotle *bestiales* or *aegritudinales* must be *turpiores* than those controlled by Temperance. This St. Thomas allows, but with a qualification:—

cum dicitur intemperantia maxime exprobrabilis, est intelligendum inter vitia humana . . . sed illa vitia quae excedunt modum humanae naturae sunt magis exprobrabilia. Et tamen etiam illa videntur reduci ad genus intemperantiae secundum quemdam excessum; sicut si aliquis delectetur in comestione carnium humanarum, aut in coitu bestiarum aut masculorum. (*S.* 2. 2. cxlii. 4. ad 3.)

St. Thomas thus contrives to allow a special position to bestial sins, but at the same time he reduces them to the same genus as other sins against Temperance. The same general estimate of *bestialitas* is repeated in the discussion of the *vitium contra naturam*. This sin is one of the *species luxuriae*, and meeting the objection:—

vitium contra naturam non continetur sub malitia sed sub bestialitate,

St. Thomas replies:—

bestialitas differt a malitia quae humanae virtuti opponitur per quemdam excessum circa eamdem materiam: et ideo ad idem genus reduci potest. (*S.* 2. 2. cciv. 11. ad 2.)

Unnatural vice is *maximum peccatum inter species luxuriae*, for all *luxuria* is bestial and this is the most bestial of all: but to say this is infinitely different from teaching that *bestialitas* is worse than the frauds and crimes caused by *malitia humana*. Another reason for the superior infamy belonging to unnatural vice is this:—

sicut ordo rationis rectae est ab homine, ita ordo naturae est ab ipso Deo. Et ideo in peccàtis contra naturam, in quibus ipse ordo naturae violatur, fit iniuria ipsi ordinatori naturae. (*S.* 2. 2. cliv. 12. ad 1.)

I will now turn to another bestial sin, the *feritas* which, like *crudelitas*, is opposed to *mansuetudo*:—

feritas vel saevitia dicitur secundum quam aliquis in poenis inferendis non considerat aliquam culpam eius qui punitur, sed solum hoc quod delectatur in hominum cruciatu . . . et ideo crudelitas differt a saevitia sive feritate sicut malitia humana differt a bestialitate. (*S.* 2. 2. clix. 2.)

The words *delectatur in hominum cruciatu* are an almost exact repetition of those applied by St. Thomas to Phalaris (p. 411). Of this vice there is little more to be said, but we must remember that, ultimately, St. Thomas pronounces *mansuetudo* to be a *pars temperantiae*, thus reducing *feritas*, like the *vitium contra naturam*, to the *genus intemperantiae*. Now it is inconceivable that any sin of that *genus* should be more culpable than injuries deliberately and maliciously planned. The whole doctrine of *bestialitas* is, in fact, summed up in the plain reflection, that the more bestial (i. e. less human) a sin is, the less grave must it be in the eyes of any Christian thinker.

As for Dante himself, there can be no doubt of his familiarity with the general way of thinking which would encourage the use of *bestialis* as a term of abuse, or as an epithet suitable to certain offences. When, for instance, he

is criticizing the kind of man who makes gentility consist only in ancient lineage, he says:—

> e tocca a tal ch' è morto e va per terra.
> (*Conv.* iv, Canz. iii, line 40.)

This he explains by reference to a well-known passage in Aristotle's *De Anima*, showing that there are many modes or senses or *vivere*, and that he who departs from the use of reason is as good as dead—*è morto uomo ed è rimaso bestia.* For the powers of the soul stand in a series, like mathematical figures:—

> Dunque, come levando l' ultimo canto del pentagono rimane quadrangolo e non più pentagono, così levando l' ultima potenza dell' anima, cioè la ragione, non rimane più uomo ma cosa con anima sensitiva solamente, cioè animale bruto. (*Conv.* iv. 7. 145.)

But although Dante would easily understand how men might be *bestiis similes*, this would not make it altogether easy for him to deal with *bestialitas* in the *Inferno.* For we have seen that St. Thomas speaks of both *malitia bestialis* and *incontinentia bestialis*, and a difficulty is thus suggested. The comparison between *malitia* and *incontinentia* is primarily a comparison between two inward states of will, each of which may produce the same external acts. Nevertheless, we have found that certain sins (e. g. *iniustitia*) are generically sins of *malitia*, and others (e. g. *luxuria*) generically sins of *incontinentia*, and Dante, even more than St. Thomas, was obliged to assume this correspondence between certain species of *peccata* and certain states of will. Now *bestialitas* also is primarily a condition of the will, but again there are definite kinds of *peccata* (e. g. the *vitium contra naturam*) which are *bestialia ex genere.* But if, on the other hand, there is both *bestialis malitia* and *bestialis incontinentia*, Dante would be obliged to consider whether he was to make two groups of bestial sins or what other courses were open to him. If he had *not* intended to set apart a special region for *bestialitas*, various practical solutions of the problem would have been possible; as, for example, he might have treated the *vitium contra naturam* as a *species luxuriae*, and *feritas* as a kind of

iniuria. But if, on the other hand, he desired to place all the bestial sins in the same circle, he would have to decide whether they should be represented as caused by (bestial) *malitia* or by (bestial) *incontinentia*: and considering that Aristotle and St. Thomas lay much stress on *prava consuetudo* as a means of producing the bestial condition, it is not surprising if, in the *Inferno*, he decided in favour of *bestialis malitia*. Here we may observe, incidentally, that some commentators have invented a spurious difficulty by insisting (*a*) that *forza* is a subdivision of *malizia*, (*b*) that Dante distinguishes *malizia* from *bestialitade*. This supposed dilemma arises, as Mr. Wicksteed and others have remarked, from failing to study the use of *malitia* in the Latin Aristotle: for by behaving in this manner Dante is exactly reproducing what he would have found in Aristotle and in St. Thomas's Commentary. Aristotle begins with the threefold division, *incontinentia*, *malitia*, *bestialitas*, but afterwards speaks of *malitia bestialis* (cf. Latin version of *Eth. Nic.* vii. 1149. a. 5 and 16–20), and the explanation of this is given in the accompanying dissertations of St. Thomas.

Bestial sins, then, Dante would quite naturally treat as effects of bestial *malitia*, but it is interesting to note that in Purgatory the *vitium contra naturam* appears as only a *species luxuriae*. Dante sees two companies of penitents approaching each other, and when they separate:—

> sopragridar ciascuna s' affatica;
> la nuova gente: 'Soddoma e Gomorra';
> e l' altra: 'Nella vacca entra Pasife.'
> (*Purg.* xxvi. 39–41.)

This example reveals most admirably the difference between Hell and Purgatory. In Purgatory *no* sins can be classified as sins of malice, for the inward state of *malitia* makes entrance to Purgatory impossible. Consequently, if Dante wished to make any mention of the *vitium contra naturam*, he had no option but to follow St. Thomas and treat it as a *species luxuriae*. But in Hell there are sins both of malice and of passion, and Dante had two alternatives. By electing to place Brunetto where we find him, and by alluding to Sodom and

Gomorrah in Purgatory, he contrives, in fact, to reflect the complete doctrine of the *Ethics*, namely, that both *malitia* and *incontinentia* can take the bestial form.

All this while I have practically assumed what some critics suppose to be the main point at issue—the presence of *bestialitas* in the circle of *forza*. For the astonishing thing about this controversy is that it is not a matter of opinion but a matter of solid and unalterable fact that the sin invariably counted a typical instance of *bestialitas* is there, before our very eyes, in the third *girone* of the seventh circle. By no possibility can the sin of Brunetto have been known to Dante as anything but a *peccatum bestiale*; and since he has taken the trouble to mention *bestialitade* in the eleventh canto, it is, surely, a desperate argument to urge that the two facts are disconnected? The answer, no doubt, will be that there are many other sins in the seventh circle which assuredly are not bestial. Now this is perfectly true, but it is also, I believe, an *ignoratio elenchi*. For after all our researches into the intentions of Dante we ought to understand that the question is, not whether all the sins in the seventh circle are bestial, but how it was that Dante could manage to combine the undoubtedly bestial sins with those injuries to God and man which are effected *secundum violentiam*. It is not a case of identifying Ciceronian *vis* and Aristotelian *bestialitas*, but of taking what might seem the far bolder step of bringing to the same moral level the Aristotelian *bestialitas* and the Aristotelian *iniuriae secundum violentiam*.

At this point we are checked by the thought that the sins of the second and third *gironi* have not yet been proved to be *iniuriae*, but before diverging to that question it will be best to re-enter the first *girone*, where there seems to be another example of *bestialitas*. Murderers, robbers, and others like unto them are certainly guilty of *iniuriae*, but I think (as others before me have thought) that Dante probably intends to see in the tyrants an illustration of the *feritas* named by St. Thomas and expressly reduced to *bestialitas*. The example given in the Commentary on the *Ethics* is that of Phalaris, who is styled *crudelissimus tyrannus*. Now all who

read the twelfth canto of the *Inferno* must be struck with the prominence of tyrants. The Centaur who acts as guide to the two poets begins by saying :—

Ei son tiranni
che dier nel sangue e nell' aver di piglio.
Quivi si piangon li spietati danni:
quivi è Alessandro e Dionisio fero.
(*Inf.* xii. 104.)

It would not be extravagant to plead that *fero* is a reminiscence of the technical *feritas*, but one would not care to hang too much upon a word. Afterwards, the Centaur explains that the river gets deeper and deeper in proportion to the guilt of the sinners :—

infin ch' ei si raggiunge
ove la tirannia convien che gema. (Ibid. 131–132.)

Tyranny is thus set before us as the worst possible instance of *violentia contra proximum*, and it is no freak of imagination to suppose that these tyrants, like Phalaris, *in ipsis cruciatibus hominum delectabantur* (p. 411), and that Dante thus overstepped the narrow boundary between the extreme form of injurious violence and bestial *feritas*. We may fairly judge, then, that Dante does punish in the seventh circle the only two kinds of bestial sin (unnatural vice and *feritas*) which St. Thomas seriously notices in his moral system.

Again: it is certain that in the *Inferno*, as we have it, the seventh circle is the only possible place for *bestialis malitia*. For if the bestial sins are committed *ex malitia* they must be worse than sins committed *ex infirmitate*, and less bad than those caused by *malitia humana*. Now Dante tells us without disguise that Fraud is the *proprio male* of man, or, in other words, is *malitia humana*. Therefore *bestialitas*, if recognized anywhere, must come between the circles of Incontinence and the circles of Fraud. But why should Dante not reserve a special circle for *bestialitas* instead of mixing it up with *iniuriae contra proximum*? Here we must call to mind the remarkable fact that, by declaring *fraus* to be morally worse than *violentia*, Dante has contradicted St. Thomas. Moreover, the fact of divergence from St. Thomas is far less sur-

prising than the spurious and invalid reason which Dante alleges for his action. Elsewhere I called the words *dell' uom proprio male* a *suggestio falsi*, and I repeat now that an insinuation to the effect that violent injuries are less characteristically human than Fraud has no warrant in the systems of Aristotle, Cicero, or St. Thomas, and no support in Dante's own doctrine of *voluntas*. All injustice is *in voluntate sicut in subiecto*, and *voluntas* effectually separates man from the beasts. Even Cicero had implied as much by his *utrumque homine alienissimum*. Therefore I say that even if Dante's personal detestation of Fraud impelled him to place it below Violence, this does not account for his naming a reason which itself is only an ingenious fraud. What, then, is the explanation? To me it seems almost ludicrously plain that Dante's statement is merely an effective device (*a*) for getting *bestialitas* into the circle of *forza*, (*b*) for thrusting *frode* down into the lowest circles of all. Which of those objects took precedence in his mind it is impossible to say, but the two can hardly be separated. If you say that Fraud is the *proprio male* of man, what can this mean but that Force is more or less bestial? But, according to the interpretation of Aristotle favoured by St. Thomas, *bestialis malitia* is just the kind of badness in which man oversteps the bounds of humanity and comes near to the behaviour of beasts. And so, by one ingenious stroke of the pen, Dante succeeds both in recognizing the special position of *bestialitas* and in proving that *frode* must occupy the lowest circles. Once rate *forza* at the value of *bestialis malitia*, and there can be no question that *frode* is more damnable.

No modern editor would dream of discovering a connexion between *bestialitas* and the 'violent' section of the *commutationes involuntariae*, but if we compare Dante with St. Thomas, I doubt if one of them is much more open to criticism than the other. In the eyes of St. Thomas, *incontinentia*, *bestialitas*, and *malitia* are three dispositions of the will involving three degrees of culpability. But is it true that he establishes *bestialitas* as a third grade? After reading only the Commentary on the *Ethics* one might be doubtful,

but in the moral system of the *Summa* it cannot be said that *bestialitas*, as an inward disposition, has any recognition. The outward sins produced by *bestialitas* are recognized, but they do not form a separate class; for unnatural vice and *feritas* are numbered with the sins opposed to *temperantia*, on the ground that *temperantia* controls the whole province of human nature in which *delectationes bestiales* are possible. Dante, on the other hand, goes (on my hypothesis) further than St. Thomas towards making *bestialitas* a third and distinct condition of will, with a special degree of culpability. For in the *Inferno* he ranks it as *malitia*, and yet divides it from *malitia humana*. Having made this decision, he took what I conceive to be the logical view of bestial sins and, since they are *ex malitia commissa*, classified them as *iniuriae*. Thus St. Thomas opposed bestial sins to Temperance, while Dante opposes them to Justice. Both courses are quite intelligible, but, if bestial sins were to count as malicious, Dante would have done wrong to confuse them with sins like that of Paolo and Francesca. A separate circle might, indeed, have been reserved for *bestialitas*, but only by sacrificing the brilliant device for getting Fraud into the desired position. I have made no attempt to prove that all the sinners in the seventh circle are *bestiales*—for that would be both absurd and superfluous—but that *bestialitas* and *violentia* are punished in the same circle is not a conjecture but a fact. Nor, personally, can I doubt that Dante's dishonest remark about the *proprio male* of men gives a hint of his intention.

II

We must now pass to the second division of the argument and try to satisfy ourselves that the sins punished in the second and third *gironi* can be regarded as *iniuriae*. Beginning with Pier delle Vigne and the suicides, we fall at once upon an astonishing fact, equally astonishing whether we attend chiefly to Dante's behaviour or to the bland indifference with which commentators have received it. For what is it that the great Chancellor says to Dante? He protests that he was faithful,

denounces the envy that caused his fall, and ends with the words :—

> L'animo mio per disdegnoso gusto,
> credendo col morir fuggir disdegno,
> ingiusto fece me contra me giusto. (*Inf.* xiii. 70.)

Every one who reads the last of these lines must allow that Dante is estimating Suicide in the one way which Aristotle proved to be impossible. Injustice must be *praeter voluntatem* on the side of the injured party (*Eth. Nic.* v. 1136. b. 3), and no man can, except metaphorically, be unjust to himself. Suicide, therefore, Aristotle declares to be an injury not to self but to the State. St. Thomas takes over Aristotle's argument without alteration and uses it on every relevant occasion. The individual, he says in one place, may be considered either *secundum se* or as *pars civitatis*. From the former point of view, Suicide

> potest quidem habere rationem alterius peccati, puta intemperantiae vel imprudentiae, non tamen rationem iniustitiae; quia sicut iustitia semper est ad alterum, ita et iniustitia. (*S.* 2. 2. lix. 3. ad 2.)

But man can also be regarded

> inquantum est aliquid civitatis, scilicet pars; vel inquantum est aliquid Dei, scilicet creatura et imago; et sic qui seipsum occidit iniuriam quidem facit non sibi sed civitati et Deo. (Ibid.)

Relatively to *caritas*, indeed, Suicide is a sin against self, for self is one of the *obiecta caritatis*, and

> quod aliquis seipsum occidat est contra inclinationem naturalem et contra caritatem qua qualibet debet seipsum diligere. (*S.* 2. 2. lxiv. 5.)

Yet in the very same context we read that Suicide is wrong for another reason :—

> quilibet homo est pars communitatis, et ita quod est est communitatis: unde in hoc quod seipsum interficit iniuriam communitati facit. (Ibid.)

So, too, we read that Suicide is opposed to both Charity and Justice, to Charity *ad seipsum*, but, *per comparationem ad communitatem et ad Deum*, to Justice also (ibid. ad 1).

Now when, in the face of all this, Dante writes down his

ingiusto fece me contra me giusto,

the one wholly inadmissible explanation is that he had forgotten his Aristotle. A schoolboy who had scrambled once through the *Ethics*, with the help of a crib, could scarcely forget the argument about Suicide; and with Dante we can only ask what induced him to disregard the orthodox tenet. I do not for a moment suggest that Dante repudiated Aristotle's argument, but I think that it suited him to treat Suicide as a sin against self, and that, in the words attributed to Pier delle Vigne, he is, to speak vulgarly, taking the bull by the horns. Observe, too, that you cannot wholly get rid of the difficulty by ridiculing the notion that *ingiusto* and *giusto* are technical terms; for in any case Dante makes Suicide a *peccatum contra seipsum*, and this in itself exposes him to serious criticism. For Dante is certainly not classifying the sin relatively to *caritas*, and the *peccata contra seipsum*, in the moral sense, are sins of a wholly different type (e. g. *intemperantia*). The use of the word *ingiusto* is, in fact, wanton and misleading unless it was perfectly deliberate.

But why should Dante deal thus with Suicide? No one can answer with certainty, but there are a few facts which bear on the question. If we return to the broad division of sins into incontinent and malicious, Suicide will naturally belong to the latter. True, a man may kill himself in a fit of passion, and then, in strict parlance, the act would be reduced to *ira*. In other words, it would lose the character of Suicide and assume what St. Thomas calls the *ratio alterius peccati*. But if Suicide is to be treated as an end deliberately willed, there is, so far as I can see, no option but to count it an *iniuria*. According to Aristotle, it is an *iniuria civitati*, but Dante does not, apparently, condemn any sinners to the Inferno on the sole ground that they had offended against the State. Even St. Thomas (Ch. xviii, p. 308) tends to oppose sins like *seditio* to *caritas*, and thus allows Aristotle's *iustitia generalis* to melt away. If, then, Dante did not intend to classify sins from the theological standpoint, he had to take

a line of his own. *Seditio* and *schisma* he can easily reduce to *iniuriae contra proximum* (i. e. sins against *iustitia particularis*), but the place of Suicide is far from obvious, and though I can find no justification for Dante at the bar of mediaeval philosophy, I believe that his action was wilful. For notice, again, that, apart from the Aristotelian view, St. Thomas was ready with a suggestion which would have converted Suicide into an *iniuria Deo* (p. 416); yet Dante, even when working upon the threefold *in Deum*, *in se*, *in proximum*, insists on selecting the least legitimate class of the three. Suicide might easily pass as an *iniuria proximo* (St. Thomas himself introduces it as a variety of *homicidium*), but to call it an *iniuria sibi* is openly to flout all respectable philosophers.

This brings me to another little deception practised by Dante. Superficially, he has covered his position by the statement:—

> A Dio, a sè, al prossimo si puone
> far forza . . . (*Inf.* xi. 31.)

But though the commentators have freely informed us that this division is taken from St. Thomas, they have not been so careful to add that Dante has entirely perverted its meaning. St. Thomas speaks of the three *ordines* against which man can offend, and writes as follows:—

> nam et virtutes quibus peccata opponuntur secundum hanc differentiam specie distinguuntur. Manifestum est enim ex dictis quod virtutibus theologicis homo ordinatur ad Deum; temperantia et fortitudine ad seipsum: iustitia autem ad proximum. (*S.* 1. 2. lxxii. 4.)

See, then, what a complete disregard of St. Thomas Dante shows. For, to begin with, it is not one section of sins but *all* sins that St. Thomas thus divides, and, from his point of view, the *peccata in seipsum* are in Dante's circles of Incontinence, the *peccata in Deum* (if anywhere) in the sixth circle, and the *peccata in proximum* in the remaining three. Instead of this, Dante confines the tripartite division to a single circle, and imposes upon *peccata in seipsum* a sense which, in the system of St. Thomas, would be impossible.

Here, too, I must interpolate a word about Capaneo and the *peccata in Deum*. By putting Blasphemy under this head Dante is, so far, in agreement with St. Thomas. He does not, like St. Thomas, oppose all *peccata in Deum* to theological virtues, but here his action is intelligible: for we believe that he intended to ignore, so far as possible, the theological view of sin, and this is done effectively by choosing the ancient and mythological Capaneo as an example of Blasphemy. Capaneo could not be damned solely for a sin against *fides*, and therefore Blasphemy is converted into an act of open rebellion against God. The only other possibility was to associate Capaneo with the heretics, but no one will pretend that this would have been appropriate. The prominence of *superbia* in Capaneo is, again, very natural. We know that *superbia*, in one sense, is regularly associated with malicious sin. It then denotes open *contemptus Dei* and is easily distinguished from *inanis gloria*. In the *Inferno*, then, Suicide and Blasphemy are handled very differently. With Blasphemy Dante only follows a principle which governs his whole representation of sins in the *Inferno*, and by calling it a *peccatum in Deum* he partially agrees with St. Thomas: but when Suicide is turned into a *peccatum in seipsum*, one can only imagine that Dante has invented this smaller ruse to help him to perpetrate the greater crime of making Suicide an injury to self.

I maintain, then, that Dante does classify Suicide as an *iniuria*, and that by his naïve confession he deprecates the technical objection. Where we must continue to fail is in the attempt to determine his exact motive. Perhaps, however, there is no need to go beyond the following considerations, (1) that if Suicide was to retain its proper character it must be treated as a malicious sin, (2) that if malicious it must be an *iniuria*, (3) that if an *iniuria* it must be violent rather than fraudulent. The reason for making it an *iniuria sibi* must remain obscure, but perhaps it was only that the threefold *in Deum*, *in se*, *in proximum* was useful to Dante for the arrangement of the other sins contained in the seventh circle.

The second *girone* is not yet disposed of, for we must not neglect the adjuncts of Suicide. When Dante writes—

> qualunque priva sè del vostro mondo,
> biscazza e fonde la sua facultade,
> e piange là dove esser dee giocondo
> (*Inf.* xi. 43)

we scarcely know how far the last two lines point to separate sins, and not merely to elements in the suicidal temper. Afterwards, in the region of the suicides, we find no clear instance of any who had sinned only by wilful *tristitia*, but the cases of Lano and Jacomo da Sant' Andrea prove that wanton extravagance can of itself qualify a sinner for this *girone*. Relatively to the notion of *iniuria*, I doubt if any new problem is thus created: for if Pier delle Vigne can call himself *ingiusto*, no one else in his neighbourhood is likely to hesitate. We all know that Dante is here making use of Aristotle's observation:—

> prodigus enim qui propter seipsum perditus. Videtur autem perditio quaedam ipsius esse et substantiae corruptio, ut vivere per has existente. (*Eth. Nic.* iv. 1120. a. 1.)

The mere fact of noticing this statement is nothing, for St. Thomas repeatedly does the same, but the remarkable fact is that Dante is again perverting the meaning of *peccatum in seipsum*. When St. Thomas is engaged in proving that *avaritia* is worse than *prodigalitas*, he quotes the above statement from Aristotle, but expressly repudiates the idea that *prodigalitas* is in any peculiar sense a *peccatum in seipsum* (*S.* 2. 2. cxix. 3. ad 1). His reason is that *all* sins of incontinence (including *avaritia* in the sense of *illiberalitas*) are *peccata in seipsum*, and elsewhere (*S.* 1. 2. lxxii. 4), when explaining the sense of *peccata in seipsum*, he associates the *prodigus* with the *gulosus* and *luxuriosus*. Evidently, then, Dante is only pursuing his nefarious plan of building up a class of *iniuriae sibi* by distorting the sense of *peccatum in seipsum*.

As to the sinners who weep when they should be joyful, excessive sadness is, in any case, a natural accompaniment

of Suicide, but Dante may have been influenced also by statements about the effects of sadness, such as this:—

passiones quae important motum appetitus cum fuga vel retractione quadam repugnant vitali motioni non solum secundum quantitatem sed etiam secundum speciem motus, et ideo simpliciter nocent: sicut timor et desperatio et prae omnibus tristitia. (*S.* 1. 2. xxxvii. 4.)

Or this:—

inter alias autem passiones tristitia efficax est ad impediendum bonum rationis, secundum illud (2 Cor. vii. 10) 'saeculi tristitia mortem operatur'; et (Eccli. xxx. 25) 'multos tristitia occidit et non est utilitas in illa'. (*S.* 2. 2. cxxxvi. 1.)

For Dante to twist one of these scriptural passages to his own purpose would be no more extravagant than his adaptation of Aristotle's statement concerning *prodigalitas*. It is enough, however, that the claim of *tristitia* to pass as an *iniuria sibi* stands or falls with that of Suicide.

In the third *girone* we have already examined Capaneo and Brunetto Latini for one purpose, but we have not yet proved that their sins can be styled *iniuriae*. As a matter of fact, St. Thomas does say of unnatural vice:—

in peccatis contra naturam, in quibus ipse ordo naturae violatur, fit iniuria ipsi Deo ordinatori naturae. (*S.* 2. 2. cliv. 12. ad 1.)

Dante's position is very similar to this, except that St. Thomas does not really mean that the *vitium contra naturam* is technically an *iniuria*. The only fair question, however, is this —can the *vitium contra naturam* and Blasphemy, being admittedly sins of malicious violence, be regarded as *iniuriae Deo*? Only one answer, surely, is possible. God cannot possibly be deceived, and so every sort of direct *iniuria Deo* must be placed in the circle of *forza*.

Last of all comes Usury, and this, too, has some curious features. St. Thomas officially classes it as an *iniuria*, and begins his condemnation of it thus:—

accipere usuram pro pecunia mutuata est secundum se iniustum, quia venditur id quod non est. (*S.* 2. 2. lxxviii. 1.)

Dante, however, has chosen to allude to a passage in the *Physics* (cf. *Inf.* xi. 101), and it is as well to remark that our right to treat Usury as an *iniuria* is not thereby diminished. The argument that Usury is a violation of Art, and therefore of Nature, is not the offspring of a single passage in the *Physics*, but is the merest commonplace of the subject, and may be traced, if necessary, to the *Ethics* or the *Politics*. St. Thomas always teaches that in Usury an art is put to an unnatural purpose, and when proving that Justice is thus outraged, he alludes to the *Politics* (i. 10):—

et Philosophus naturali ratione ductus dicit quod 'usuraria acquisitio pecuniarum est maxime praeter naturam'. (*S.* 2. 2. lxxviii. 1. ad 3.)

In the *De Malo* he combines Justice and Nature by saying that Usury is *contra rationem iustitiae naturalis* (*De Mal.* xiii. 2). Dante's account of Usury is quite consistent with treating it as an *iniuria*, and it is only the fact of ranking it as 'violent' that provokes further question—for, as I have shown elsewhere (Ch. xvi, p. 277), Usury is not named among the *commutationes involuntariae*, whether violent or fraudulent. Dante, no doubt, is moved by the simple reflection that the injured party (Art or Nature or God) cannot be said to be in ignorance of the injury done: but we ought also to remember the Aristotelian conjunction of words, *βίᾳ καὶ παρὰ φύσιν*, where *βίᾳ* and *παρὰ φύσιν* are practically equivalent expressions. Thus when Aristotle is criticizing the different *βίοι*, he says that the life whch makes money its ultimate goal is *βίαιός τις* (*Eth. Nic.* i. 1096. a. 6), which means, undoubtedly, that such a view of money is *παρὰ φύσιν*. If Dante, then, had understood Aristotle the conjunction of *violentia* and *praeter naturam*, relatively to Usury, would have been ready to hand; but, unfortunately, the true sense of *βίαιος* had been lost.[1] The translation, *pecuniosus autem quis violenter est*, is far from helpful, and St. Thomas says in the Commentary:—

pecunia per violentiam acquiritur et per violentiam perditur.

[1] If Professor Burnet (cf. his note *ad loc.*) is right in thinking that the Latin version implies the reading *βίᾳ ὅστις*, not *βίαιός τις*, my statement about Aristotle will seem too positive, but I prefer to let it stand.

Sed hoc non convenit felicitati, quae est finis voluntariarum operationum. (*Eth.* i. 5.)

It is very doubtful whether Dante would have seen in this any allusion to Usury. Still, it is possible that he would have derived the alliance of *violentia* and *praeter naturam* from his general knowledge of Aristotle; nor is there, in any case, a real difficulty about looking upon Usury as an *iniuria*.

The more we examine the seventh circle, the more artificial, not to say fraudulent, does it appear. According to the doctrine of St. Thomas, this circle must either not exist at all, or be placed lower down than the circles of Fraud. Not content with this wider divergence, Dante goes on to Suicide and throws over both St. Thomas and Aristotle. In addition, we have noticed (1) the deceptive insinuation of *dell' uom proprio male*, (2) the travesty of St. Thomas's *in Deum, in se, in proximum*, (3) the misrepresentation of *peccatum in seipsum* in the matter of *prodigalitas*. I will not repeat my own arguments, but to me it becomes ever more obvious that the root of the whole matter was Dante's intention of combining *bestialis malitia* with *iniuriae secundum violentiam*, in order both to follow the *Ethics* by recognizing *bestialitas*, and to push Fraud into the lowest depths of Hell. Having constructed a circle on this rather artificial basis, Dante resolved, I imagine, to place in it any malicious sins, such as Blasphemy or Suicide, which were examples of *violentia*. Meanwhile, I shall claim, without hesitation, that all the sins in the circle are *iniuriae*.

CHAPTER XXV

CONCLUSION

If we turn back now to the first chapter, we shall find there a sketch of the principal difficulties which are likely to trouble any critical reader of the *Divine Comedy*. Perhaps, at the end of our investigations, we might not wish to preserve exactly the order of enumeration there adopted, but, allowing for some slight alteration in that respect, we cannot do better in conclusion than ask whether any one of our original problems has received a convincing solution. That logical demonstration is possible I have never pretended. Probability is the utmost that can be expected, but my contention from first to last has been that probability, as relative to Dante, cannot be measured by popular standards of the twentieth century, nor even by the modern (and doubtless superior) estimate of certain philosophical doctrines which Dante is known to have studied. In proposing the works of St. Thomas as a rough criterion, I suggested a method which no one can call extravagant, and if I differ from previous commentators, it is not by making an appeal to the *Summa*, but by making it systematically and by pushing the comparison to the bitter end. One of the first results of looking into the method of St. Thomas was that we were warned of the absurdity of expecting complete agreement between our two authors. We learned that it would be easy and natural for Dante to differ from even the highest authorities on many points, without dissenting in the smallest degree from the fundamental principles of their moral teaching. That Dante does sometimes differ from St. Thomas has been proved by almost startling instances, yet no visible discrepancy, even upon a matter so significant for Dante as the comparison of Force and Fraud, would warrant us in suspecting a difference of opinion upon the great

questions of moral responsibility which underlie the whole scheme of the *Inferno*. That God is *Scrutator cordis*, that the will alone is the seat of *culpa*, that a man is guilty, not of the act which he does, but of the act which he intends—these are the foundation stones of morality and religion, and to hint that Dante could trifle with these principles would be as absurd as to call him an atheist or a Mohammedan. But important as it is to keep a firm hold on these rudimentary ideas, the interpretation of the *Inferno* requires much more. That very *consensus doctorum* which St. Thomas discerned at the back of the greater moral doctrines is itself the source of much latitude in the definition of primary truths and in the derivation of secondary consequences. If it can be taken for granted that Aristotle and Cicero and Gregory and Petrus Lombardus are in essential agreement, there would often seem to be no special reason for preferring one to another: or if St. Thomas chose to follow Aristotle, for instance, rather than Cicero, he would do so without prejudice to the right of others to be satisfied with the Ciceronian expression of the same facts. So soon, then, as we begin to understand this dialectical frame of mind, we shall cease to expect that Dante will always reproduce the teaching of St. Thomas, but we shall not cease to regard a difference as significant. What it signifies is, not a radical disagreement, but the existence of alternatives and of some reason for Dante's choice. It may be that the reason can be detected in the very pages of St. Thomas, or, more probably, we may have to consider the particular nature and circumstances of Dante's poem. But I do not believe that there is a single case in which St. Thomas fails to throw some light upon the course pursued by Dante. Yet I should be misleading the reader, and doing an injustice to my own pretensions, if I were to end by leaving the impression that nothing more had been accomplished than an elaborate comparison between two authors, with, perhaps, some explanation of their partial disagreement. For though I neither assert that Dante was bound always to follow St. Thomas, nor even that he did take St. Thomas for his chief authority, I go so far as to claim that a study of the

philosophical doctrines current in the time of St. Thomas does in fact remove or greatly diminish every one of those traditional difficulties which were formulated in the first chapter, and which are now, for the last time, to be revised. These, then, I will take in an order that differs but slightly from that in which they were originally stated; the difference being only that what was formerly put down as the second problem is more conveniently treated as the first.

I. *Why are there no malicious sins in Purgatory?*

Malicious sins are excluded from Purgatory for the unanswerable reason that *malitia* in the will is a state of impenitence. Therefore, whoever *dies* in the state of *malitia* is cut off from the hope of salvation. Yet the apprehension of this single point is not enough. We need to combine three propositions:—

(1) that the state of *malitia*, so long as it lasts, entails everlasting punishment;

(2) that the specification of *peccata* is relative to the condition of the agent's will, because *finis dat formam in moralibus*. Hence it is only when a man wills an act for its own sake that he is guilty of that act;

(3) that the effect of repentance is to remove the inward *malitia*, but (*a*) to leave the will in need of further purification, (*b*) to make the sinner liable to penance, which must continue until the purification is completed.

Thus, if *A* kills a man deliberately, and *B* kills a man in an outbreak of anger, it is certain that Dante would define *A*'s sin as *homicidium*, *B*'s as *ira*. Now when we come to the classifying of sins in Purgatory, it is clear that no malicious *iniuriae* can be found there: for that would imply that a sinner could enter Purgatory without having cast *malitia* out of his soul. You may argue that the state of will existing in Purgatory has no true parallel on earth, and that it is as difficult to recognize *ira* there as to speak of *homicidium*; but although the effect of penitence is immediately and finally to remove *malitia*, the will relapses, so to speak, into the state of

infirmitas: the absolute intention is now towards God, but the *aliae vires* of the soul must still be cleansed by penance. Because, then, all the souls in Purgatory, whether they sinned maliciously or not, are in this state of partially purified will, Dante regards all their sins as *circa passiones*, i. e. he reduces them all to the seven capital vices, one or other of which must have been the original cause of sin, before the state of *malitia* was reached. Dante's principle is that no act can be morally estimated without reference to the existing state of the agent's will. If there is no inward *malitia* in Purgatory, neither can there be any malicious sins.

II. *Why are some of the capital vices not found in Hell?*

Here we have a more complex problem, but our knowledge of *malitia* brings some assistance. Knowing that *malitia* and the capital vices are mutually exclusive, we shall waste no time in diving about for *acedia* or *invidia* in the three lowest circles. On the other hand, we are firmly convinced that there is no reason why Dante should *not* have punished in Hell every one of the capital vices. Under these circumstances, we conclude that *none* of the capital vices are recognized in the *Inferno*, except *per accidens;* and this means that Dante held himself free to represent the same totality of evil in two distinct ways. Believing, too, that he would naturally be inclined to make the scheme of the *Inferno* harmonize with his conception of Virgil, we look to the traditions of ancient philosophy for an explanation. My own belief is that Dante intended to follow Aristotle so far as possible, but as regards many parts of the *Inferno* the question of the authority preferred by him may be left undetermined. For instance, neither Aristotle nor Cicero name *acedia* and *invidia* among the vices, and, so far, it matters nothing which of them Dante took for his model. Similarly, both Aristotle and Cicero lay emphasis on the vice called *superbia* or *inanis gloria* or *praesumptio*, and some such vice must, therefore, be expected in the *Inferno*.

III. *What is to be said about the circle of Heresy?*

After travelling, then, through the first five circles of Hell, we are still looking for the sin which, in Aristotelian language, is the *excessus* relatively to *magnanimitas*. We then come upon the Heretics and are arrested by the silence of Dante, which intimates that Heresy is caused neither by *incontinenza* nor by *malizia*. The points that I have urged are these:—

(1) that Dante in the *Inferno* keeps the theological aspect of sins out of sight;

(2) that, nevertheless, he could not wholly ignore the sin opposed to *fides*;

(3) that this sin must be especially prominent, just because Aristotle and secular philosophy had not conceived its existence;

(4) that, because Heresy is the sin of the *intellectus speculativus*, it is difficult to ascribe it either to *incontinenza* or to *malizia*;

(5) that its position in the *Inferno* is, nevertheless, the only possible one. For a sin of the intellect must be worse than sins of the lower appetite, but less bad than sins *in voluntate sicut in subiecto*;

(6) that Heresy is traditionally associated with Pride, and that St. Thomas, with some hesitation, offers to trace it to *superbia vel inanis gloria*;

(7) that the sense of *superbia* is such that it wavers between sins of incontinence and sins of malice.

When all these points are taken together, we seem to effect three things simultaneously. We discover the sin of Pride or Presumption; we account for its not being thus described; we account also for the silence about Heresy and for its peculiar situation in the *Inferno*.

IV. *Does Dante recognize bestialitas?*

My first claim here is to have removed a source of confusion. So long as it was thought that the distinction of *forza* and

frode was borrowed solely from Cicero, commentators were in a false position. But when we learn from St. Thomas that the same distinction was thought to be enjoined by Aristotle, we increase the probability that Dante intended to follow the *Nicomachean Ethics*. It is true that Dante echoes the sentiment of the *De Officiis* concerning *fraus*, but it is not true that he reflects the doctrine of Cicero, as expressed in the words *utrumque homine alienissimum*. The other points are:—

(1) that Dante differs from St. Thomas in counting Fraud worse than Force;

(2) that by calling Fraud the *proprio male* of man he insinuates that Force is bestial;

(3) that St. Thomas applies the term *bestialis malitia* to certain human sins, and unquestionably regards *bestialis malitia* as less grave than *malitia humana*;

(4) that the seventh circle is exactly the right position for *bestialis malitia*;

(5) that the conjunction of *bestialitas* with *forza* would supply Dante with a reason for putting *frode* in the lower depths;

(6) that the bestial sins are, as a matter of fact, punished in the circle of *forza*. *Bestialitade* and *forza* are not purely identical, but for the reasons named above they are punished in the same circle.

V. *Are there any sins in the 'Inferno' whose position is unexplained?*

To speak more definitely the question is—why should some sins be generically ascribed to Malice, and others (more grave, perhaps, in common estimation) to Incontinence? The answer is given as soon as we understand the correspondence between inward *malitia* and sins against Justice. Only when the will is malicious is it true to say that *ingiuria è il fine*. In other words, all the malicious sins in the *Inferno* are *peccata opposita iustitiae*, and these sins are the worst of all (apart from the theological standpoint) because Justice is the greatest of the

moral virtues. Besides failing to understand the connexion of *malizia* and *ingiuria*, many commentators have gone astray for lack of the broad and simple principle that the graver among human vices are those associated with the higher parts of human nature. If we imagine that sin is due to the survival of a bestial nature in a rational being, we shall never understand the *Divine Comedy*, and we shall naturally be surprised to find Flattery and Hypocrisy punished more severely than many of the sins in Dante's higher circles. But Christianity has dismissed this conception of moral evil, and whatever Aristotle or Cicero may have intended to teach, neither St. Thomas nor Dante could do otherwise than look for the blackest sins in the highest regions of our rational life.

A writer is naturally optimistic about his own theories, and it would be absurd to suppose that every one will share my conviction that there are no real difficulties in the plan of the *Inferno* or in its divergence, real and apparent, from the *Purgatorio*. But even if I am not so fortunate as to persuade the learned world that my arguments are valid, I shall hope to have shown, at the very least, that the day for discussing these problems is far from past. Arrogant and ungenerous as it would seem to maintain that a real knowledge of scholastic philosophy has never yet been brought to bear on the *Divine Comedy*, I am bound to observe that an essay like Witte's makes not even the feeblest effort to interpret Dante by means of the philosophical ideas in which he had been nurtured. And here I would repeat that I have not credited Dante with half as much philosophical knowledge as his extant works prove him to have possessed. Grant that he had studied intelligently for a year or two, and that he was blessed with a tolerable memory, and I do not think that the general scheme of the *Inferno* would have obliged him to reopen one of his books. Special matters would have been difficult, such as the status of a Heresy in a system derived from Aristotle and secular authors, but even here the perusal of two or three statements of St. Thomas would have suggested the alliance of Heresy with Pride. The treatment of *forza* and of *bestialitade* shows a touch of idiosyncrasy, but, for the most part, the

construction of the *Inferno* is ordinary and normal. Dante was a Christian with a passion for ancient philosophy, but the feats that he performs in the way of harmonizing Pagan and Christian traditions are as nothing when compared with those openly displayed to us in the stupendous system of St. Thomas.

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